

**MUSLIM POLITICS & DEMOCRACY – AN ANALYSIS OF THE ARAB  
SPRING**

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# **MUSLIM POLITICS & DEMOCRACY – AN ANALYSIS OF THE ARAB SPRING**

## **Abstract**

The Arab Spring was a phenomenon that shocked the international community. Starting with Tunisia in December of 2010, the citizens of Egypt, Libya, and Iran all voiced dissatisfaction with their governing leaders within the same period. The massive protests and demonstrations that broke out would soon prove to be different from the protests that occurred in the 1970s. What the world witnessed from December 2010 to February 2011 were calls for the resignation of authoritarian leaders and a new democratic government. The calls symbolized a new wave of potential Muslim democracies that would test the U.S. theory of liberal democracy. Today, Muslim democracies in the Arab world are marginal due to a lack of sustainability. Further, the development of these countries democratic transitions could determine the future of Muslim democracies in the Middle East North Africa (MENA) region.

The chain reaction of events in the Arab Spring showed the world that the citizens were ready to regain control over their countries. After decades of being under authoritarian regimes, why did the uprisings occur at that time and what implications did they have on the future of Muslim democracies? This research question is explored in three chapters that examine and analyze the potential answers. The chapters draw upon theory, scholarly writings, and international news sources. The Arab Spring is continuing to develop in the MENA region, which makes credible international news sources crucial to this analysis. The theoretical composition of this thesis includes the discussions of revolution, liberal democracy, Islam and secularism.

The results of this methodology present essential factors that will be imperative to the sustainability of future Muslim democracies. The factors include pre-existing conditions, political Islam, foreign intervention, the military's role, Islamic political organizations, secularism and a transformation in political culture. The conclusion asserts these factors have contributed to the occurrence of the uprisings and further will act as the determinants of sustainability for future Muslim democracies in MENA region. In addition to the events of the Arab Spring providing new implications that test the compatibility of Islam and liberal democracy.

Thesis Readers: Dr. Alexander Rosenthal & Dr. Ken Masugi

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## **Introduction**

Civil unrest, limited freedoms, Islamic extremists, military regimes and longstanding dictatorships are all features of the Arab Spring, witnessed in the Middle East North Africa (MENA) region. In the 21st century, the world witnessed citizens in countries such as Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Iran and others, express their discontent with their existing governments. Similar protests and demonstrations were seen in the 1970s, but the results of the Arab Spring have introduced new implications on the United States (U.S) theory of liberal democracy. The discontent was expressed in the form of massive protests and demonstrations that would eventually lead to the resignation of dictators in Tunisia and Egypt as well as arrests. The uprisings in Libya resulted in the assassination of dictator, Muammar Qaddafi in the midst of chaotic international intervention.

Since the ousting of those dictators, the unraveling of the Arab Spring has continued present challenges in Muslim democracies compatibility with a liberal democracy. Overall, the progression of the Arab Spring has been quite marginal in respects to establishing democracies beyond elections and further sustaining order. Therefore, this research seeks to an in-depth analysis of why the events of the Arab Spring occurred and what implications can be drawn on the future of Muslim democracies. Through the study of both research questions, theories, the compatibility between Islam and liberal democracy, and additional factors such as the military's role, Islamic political organizations and secularism and all examined. The analysis of liberal democracy is centered upon Islam's initial challenges with secular pluralism. This thesis will examine the events and outcomes of the Arab Spring to analyze the implications on Muslim politics and democracy in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Iran and Turkey. The study of

these implications is examined in three chapters: 1) The Revolts and Protests of the Arab Spring — Before America? Tunisia, Egypt, Libya — Iran 2) Can Islam and Liberal Democracy coexist? A Case Study of Tunisia, Egypt, and Turkey 3) Tunisia's Progress and Egypt's Steps Backwards.

Chapter One titled “The Revolts and Protests of the Arab Spring — Before America? Tunisia, Egypt, Libya – Iran,” takes a historical approach to examine the uprisings. This chapter seeks reasons for why the events of the Arab Spring occurred and if the U.S. promotion of democracy in Iraq acted as a catalyst for the Arab Spring. Critics of the Arab Spring argue the success of the Iraqi democracy is a result of the U.S. promotion of democracy in the region. Contrary to the conventional wisdom, this chapter argues the uprisings occurred because of other pre-existing conditions beyond the U.S. promotion of democracy such as political oppression, poverty, and ethnic conflicts.

The chapter begins with a literature review to present theoretical implications who why and how the uprisings occurred. This review prompts the discussion of the differentiating factors between revolution and protests. In doing so, the countries of the Arab Spring are categorized based on if the uprisings resulted in massive protests or the resignation by the president and calls for a new government. Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya all experienced actual revolutions, while Iran went through a series of massive protest that the military were finally able to subdue. The analysis of revolutions is continued with the element of cultures. Since the pre-existing conditions of the Arab Spring were not new, there was a culture transformation that took place within the people, in order for the uprisings to occur. Next, the question of how the protesters were able to mobilize is discussed by analyzing the micromobilization, rational choice, and the domino theory.

The micro-mobilization assists in understanding how the use of social media during the uprisings allowed protesters to gain support and show people their daily reality. The rational choice theory provides support for why the people decided to join in the streets and on social media to protest the injustices. Lastly, the domino theory explains the geographic impact of the Arab Spring.

The question of why the citizens of Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and even Iran chose to protest and rise up against their existing state still remains. In order to answer this question, it is imperative to do an analysis of Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and even Iran to examine what life was like for these citizens leading up to the uprisings. This study uncovers the pre-existing conditions that explain why the uprisings happened beyond the U.S. promotion of democracy. The dictators in Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya ruled for more than 20 years. Overtime, each president, amended the constitution to guarantee he would stay in power while implementing laws that restricted the freedom of their citizens.

Iran has been chosen as an outlier for the study to examine why the country has not experienced a revolution since 1979. Through the analysis of the massive protests in 2009, the government's actions reveal a form of repression that has led to its ability to sustain power. However, as this chapter indicates, with the pre-existing conditions there could be a revolution in the future for Iran. This chapter concludes with recommendations for all the countries and a look to the future of their democratic transitions. Further, this study provides support for the pre-existing conditions of political oppression, poverty and ethnic conflicts acting as catalysts for the uprisings beyond the U.S. implementation of the Iraqi democracy.

Chapter 2 titled "Can Islam and Liberal Democracy coexist in Egypt and Tunisia?"

A Case Study of Tunisia, Egypt, and Turkey,” examines specific reasons that have led to the lack of sustainability in Muslim democracies other than the historical pattern of authoritarian regimes regaining power in the Arab world, which leads critics to argue that Islam and democracy are not compatible. However, the question of compatibility lies within Islam and liberal democracy. The reason there are not more Muslim democracies is due to reasons beyond the conventional wisdom, such as political Islam, power, and past and present foreign intervention.

The study of these factors begins with defining Islam, liberal democracy and liberal autocracy. Islam discussed as a religion and then the ideology of political Islam. The analysis is used to provide a basis for understanding universal concepts of Islam and how the different interpretations are infused into the political arena. Liberal democracy is examined and defined as a system with that ensures liberties, rights and freedoms through equal participation, political competition, and legitimacy. Next, the theory of liberal autocracy presents the negative impacts foreign intervention due to the U.S. promotion of liberal democracy. Egypt and Tunisia are further discussed to examine if the countries have dealt with the issues of political Islam, power, and past and present foreign intervention. After, this analysis, the chapter focuses on Turkey’s history and why it could be considered a model for both countries. This chapter concludes with recommendations for Tunisia and Egypt based on the Turkish democracy.

The final chapter of this thesis examines what factors have led to Tunisia’s progress towards democracy and Egypt’s plague in democratization. Tunisia is continuing to progress in their steps towards democracy; however, Egypt seems to be spiraling out of control and even taken steps backwards in their democratization. Critics of the Arab



Spring attribute Egypt's regression to support their claim that democratic transitions provide pathways for Islamist to resurge in governance. However, the case of Tunisia and Egypt provide two different perspectives of this conventional wisdom, which means there are other factors that would make Islamic governance positive or negative for the country. This chapter examines targets the additional factors of the military's role in politics, Islamic political organizations and the cooperation between Islamist and Secularist.

Tunisia's example shows democratic elections that result in Islamic governance can very well be positive for a country with the consideration of the other factors. On October 23, 2011, the Ennadha party was victorious in winning the majority of seats in the Constituent Assembly. This victory had major implications on the drafting of the new constitution and the legislation that could be introduced. Overtime the party has faced a growing opposition and continued civil unrest; however, the Ennadha party has cooperated with other secular groups. The current Tunisian government is a prominent example of what can be accomplished when Islamist and Secularist work together. This study of Tunisia further shows a historical isolation of the military from politics and a deeply rooted encouragement of secularism. In addition to the marginal influence of Islamic political organizations have essentially led to Tunisia's continued progress in democratization.

However, the case of Egypt presents the factors above in a different light. The Egyptian military is heavily involved in politics, the Muslim Brotherhood victory in electing President Mohamed Morsi resulted in tensions between the military and government, and the cooperation between Islamist and secularist has been marginal. The

analysis of Egypt shows the country's regression provides support for critics that claim democratic transitions provide a path for Islamists to resurge in the state. However, this chapter provides a comparative analysis of Tunisia and Egypt to discuss the reasons beyond the conventional wisdom that have hindered the democratization for both countries at different times. This chapter concludes with recommendations based on the factors analyzed and predictions for the future of democracy in both countries.

The overarching theme of this thesis is centered how the events of the Arab Spring have prompted implications on the view of liberal democracy and the sustainability of future Muslim democracies. The chapters of this thesis address the factors of how and why the uprisings occurred, the compatibility of Islam and liberal democracy, and the military's role in politics, Islamic political organizations, and the cooperation between Islamist and secularist. The study of the factors above examines the existing conventional wisdom and knowledge of the topic. However, since the Arab Spring is a more recent phenomenon, instead of disproving the existing theories, this thesis concludes with additional factors that provide justification for the events beyond the conventional wisdoms. As the countries continue to progress towards democracy, the factors addressed in this thesis must be monitored, in order to determine what new attributes of Muslim democracies will be revealed. The theory of Muslim democracy continues to expand because none the modern Muslim democracies are exactly alike. Essentially, this thesis shows additional attributes that will have to be considered examining the sustainability of Muslim democracies.

Overtime, the theory of liberal democracy has become complex the consensus amongst theorist that there are constraints on ensuring liberalism for all individuals. What

has been agreed upon to a certain extent is that democracy alone in regards free and fair elections and political competition is not enough to sustain democracy. The outcome of this study shows the new wave of Muslim Democracies test and even further challenge present challenges to the promotion of liberal democracy. The case of Egypt challenges the notion that democratic elections improve stability in the region and further provides reason that Muslim Democracies will require more than just elections to implement democracy. While free and fair elections are important, the study of the Arab Spring shows other factors such as equal participation and legitimacy that are key to ensuring the results of elections are effective. In addition to demonstrating, that democratic elections do not secure liberties, rights, and freedoms. Political competition presents a unique part in relation to the Arab Spring for several reasons. The former authoritarian regimes of the Arab Spring prohibited opposition parties from running in elections that made political competition nonexistent. However, as the third chapter conventional wisdom shows, democratic elections increase political competition and further open up room for Islamist to resurge. The study of Tunisia reveals political competition and Islamist in government can be positive for democratization.

Lastly, the events of the Arab Spring could not be examined without a debate on the compatibility of Islam and liberal democracy. This analysis reveals initial conflicts with traditionalist views of Islam and secular pluralism. Further this discussion reveals a change that is needed in the U.S. foreign policy in the promotion of liberal democracy. The study presents the reasons why Muslim democracies have not been sustainable in the past and how the Turkish democracy is a comparable model. The results of this align closely with the analysis of the cooperation between Islamist and secularist. In the

Tunisian government, the cooperation between both parties has allowed the country to continue to progress in democratic reforms. The conclusion of this thesis provides a synopsis of the thesis and its contribution to the study of Muslim Politics and Democracy. The main findings, methodologies and challenges to previous research are presented for each chapter. In addition to what aspects of the thesis are significant and can further lead to opportunities for further research.

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **THE REVOLTS AND PROTESTS OF THE ARAB SPRING—BEFORE AMERICA? TUNISIA, EGYPT, AND LIBYA—IRAN**

# **THE REVOLTS AND PROTESTS OF THE ARAB SPRING — BEFORE AMERICA? TUNISIA, EGYPT, AND LIBYA — IRAN (A theoretical approach)**

## **Introduction**

Revolutions, civil war, and powerful authoritarian regimes are all relevant characteristics of the Middle East and Northern America (MENA) region. Powerful dictators ruled in the countries of Tunisia, Egypt and Libya with an authoritarian rule for over twenty years. Former president of Tunisia, Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali, ruled from 1987 to 2011 when he was forced to flee the country due to massive protest.<sup>1</sup> Hosni Mubarak former president in Egypt ruled from 1981 to 2011, when he was forced to flee the country due to the same reason.<sup>2</sup> Muammar Qaddafi former statesmen of Libya ruled from 1969 to 2011, while the exact cause of his death remains unclear, Qaddafi and bodyguards were assassinated after attempting to flee in the midst of a North American Treaty Organization (NATO) airstrike in Sirte.<sup>3</sup> In the case of Iran, multiple presidents have been impeached over the past century due to incompetency and citizen disapproval; however, there has not been a revolution since 1979.<sup>4</sup> The timing of the uprisings suggests there could have been commonalities in the citizen's discontent. Have the citizens of these countries simply had enough of the oppressive regimes?

In order to begin to answer this question, the term revolution must be defined and analyzed. Since the citizens of the Arab Spring were subject to autocratic rule for such a long period of time, there are implications of additional factors that encouraged the uprisings such as a change in culture. After analyzing the concept of revolution, then it

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<sup>1</sup>Ghetta, L. *The Geopolitical Repressions of the Tunisian Jasmine Revolution on North Africa*. Report, International Affairs, Diplomacy and Strategy, 2011.

<sup>2</sup>—. "Profile: Hosni Mubarak." May 24, 2011. <http://www.bbc.co.uk> (accessed April 30, 2012).

<sup>3</sup>The Arab Spring: Rebellion, Revolution and a New World Order.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

will be easier to categorize the countries based on a revolution actually occurring or massive violent protests. What elements determine a revolution and how is one formed? This question will be answered by examining the micromobilization, rational choice, and domino theory. In doing so, the theories will provide support for the why the uprisings of the Arab Spring occurred and what implications can be drawn for future uprisings in the MENA region. Further this assessment acts as the theoretical framework for the analysis of what factors contributed to the uprisings.

## **THE REVOLTS AND PROTESTS OF THE ARAB SPRING—BEFORE AMERICA? TUNISIA, EGYPT, AND LIBYA — IRAN (A theoretical approach)**

### **Revolution Defined**

Revolutions can be industrial, military, religious, and political, with the intent to bring about drastic change in a political system and or a governing infrastructure. In analyzing the types of revolutions, empirical definitions such as the one above consistently surface. Lawrence Stone's literature review entitled "Theories of Revolution" assesses historical views on revolution.<sup>5</sup> While Stone examines multiple definitions, revolution defined by Chalmers Johnson has been widely accepted by historians because of its vagueness. Johnson defined revolution as change in government, regime, or society due to the use of violence.<sup>6</sup> In this context, there is an indication of how revolutions and protests differ. Therefore, Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya have experienced some form of a revolution; however, Iran has only experienced a series of massive protests since the revolution of 1979. Johnson's definition is simplistic enough to provide a basic approach to categorizing the events within each country. This definition does not assert the outcome or the level of change in government that is needed for a revolution to be successful. Further critics of this definition could disagree with this assertion because Johnson's definition does not provide any implications on what type of change is needed on a social level for a revolution to occur.

John Foran concluded to a similar consensus in his study of the Iranian Revolution. Foran believed there is a need for scholars to develop a better understanding of how culture, shared values, and ideologies become catalyst in the cause and outcomes

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<sup>5</sup> Stone, L. "Theories of Revolution." *World Politics* 18, no. 2 (June 1966): 159-176.

<sup>6</sup> Johnson, C. "Revolution and the Social System." *Hoover Institution Studies*, 1964.



of revolutions.<sup>7</sup> The first important aspect in discussing the culture of the Arab Spring is the commonality of social classes within the protestors. The protestors were able to immediately establish a collective ideology because they were either from the working class or a part of the young educated population. Both social classes were caught in the midst of failing economies and high unemployment. Overtime, the citizens were promised relief from dictators through modernization, which fell short of reaching the lower classes of society and redistributing wealth. In addition to the continued constraints placed on liberties, religious minorities, and even women.

The shared values and collective beliefs at the grass-root level significantly contributed to the outcomes of the revolutions. Historically, revolutions have proven to be successful in transforming society when there is a large support from the lower classes.<sup>8</sup> This has been witnessed in Bolivia, Algeria, and Cambodia, when lower classes have experienced the overwhelming pressures of modernization.<sup>9</sup> The pressures of modernization existed for decades prior to the uprisings but the transformation of culture in Arab Spring proved to be significant when the protestors committed to their ideological goals of a better society and to reform their current one. In addition to citizens witnessing neighboring countries protesting for the same democratic call and reformation in government. This presents the question of how did the citizens mobilize to form the massive protests and in turn revolutions?

### **Micromobilization Theory**

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid, "Theory and History of revolution."

<sup>8</sup> Dix, R.H. The Varieties of Revolution. *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 15, No. 3 (Apr., 1983), pp. 281-294

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

The micromobilization theory has emerged in recent decades as the ways of communicating have advanced through technology. Today, technology has developed across the world and people are able to communicate with one another in different countries using social networks such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube. The power of communication through social networks allowed citizens to speak out about social injustices and develop petitions against oppressive regimes. Egyptian citizens created Facebook pages against the Hosni Mubarak in January of 2010, when a worker was brutality beaten by police.<sup>10</sup> As time progressed the petitions and videos against the regime were posted all over the web, and Mubarak shut down Internet access throughout Egypt.<sup>11</sup> Scholars such as Ihab el-Sakkout, Oxfam's Middle East Media Advisor, deemed social networks as important but not the actual driver of the revolutions; however, campaigns were posted on social networks prior to the massive protest in Cairo's Tahrir Square.<sup>12</sup> The creators of the social network campaigns were younger; college educated, and felt the effects of high unemployment rates and limitations on civil liberties.

Prior to the social network campaigns from Egyptian college students, the video of a Tunisian man lighting himself on fire in front of the governor's office sent a massive wave of enraged Tunisians to the streets.<sup>13</sup> Mohamed Bouazizi, a fruit vendor, self-immolated his self after police brutality attacked him and confiscated his fruit stand.<sup>14</sup> The video was uploaded to Facebook and went viral on the Internet, which resulted in an increased awareness of the situation. People commented, reposted and shared the video to

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<sup>10</sup> Bekkers, Victor, Rebecca Moody, and Arthur Edwards. "Micromobilization, Social Media, and Coping Strategies: Some Dutch Experiences." *Policy and Internet* 3, no. 155.4 (2011)

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Elezz, M. A. "Social Networks; Catalyzers of Arab Spring." February 2, 2012. <http://www.middle-east-online.com> (accessed May 3, 2012).

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Worth, R. "How a Single Match an Ignite a revolution." *New York Times*. January 21, 2011. <http://www.nytimes.com> (accessed May 4, 2012).

promote and gain support for the uprisings. The social network campaigns provided a platform for citizens to collaborate and form opposing informal groups. The occurrences in Egypt and Tunisia demonstrate how the two-way communications such as Facebook, allow individuals who are not necessarily affiliated with an organization or party to organize amongst themselves.<sup>15</sup> The citizens of Egypt and Tunisia were able to connect, and mobilize using the Internet based on similar issues and overall goals, which was to remove the dictators and institute a democracy. The Micromobilization theory provides support for how people mobilized in the Arab Spring; therefore, the next theory will start the discussion on the citizen's emotions behind the violent and massive demonstrations.

### **Rational Choice Theory**

The Rational Choice Theory (RCT) is described as an individuals being motivating by their wants and acting based on the information given to them about the conditions surrounding their actions.<sup>16</sup> The uprisings of the Arab Spring were in pursuit of a change in government, living conditions, freedoms and liberties in the name of democracy. The campaigns and advocacy during the Arab Spring encouraged citizens to fight for change. The RCT also asserts that individuals must anticipate the different outcomes of their actions to determine the best action. The citizens were burdened with the reoccurring problems with their existing governments and essentially had to decide if they wanted to continue to deal with the oppression or fight for a better way of life. The uprisings in Tunisia influenced the protests seen in Egypt because the citizens were able to witness the power of massive protests. As a result, the citizens of the Arab Spring

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid, "Micromobilization, Social Media, and Coping Strategies: Some Dutch Experiences."

<sup>16</sup> Scott, J. From Understanding Contemporary Society: Theories of The Present, edited by G. Browning, A. Halcli, and F. Webster. (Sage Publications, 2000).

witnessed the neighboring governments inability to control the massive uprisings, which in turn increased the benefits of protesting because it was working. Through the use of social network campaigns the incentives of ousting the regimes were presented; therefore, the citizens were more likely to dismiss uncertainties and sold on the possibility of a new way of life.

The rational choice to protest in the uprisings is also linked to the bandwagon model. The bandwagon model shows how social unrest on the grassroots level evolves into massive movements.<sup>17</sup> The campaign and advocacy using social networks and other media outlets allowed people to develop relationships, coordinate plans, and express support for one another, which encouraged more people to join the movements. As people mobilize at an increasing rate, the bandwagon model asserts that when a major event such as a street vendor setting himself aflame in Tunisia, this ignites a reaction of massive protesters.<sup>18</sup> The rational choice theory says that the decision of an action one chooses is based on cost and benefit of that action; however, if people are living in poverty, oppression, face religious and ethnic conflicts, the benefits of ousting an oppressive leader can override the monetary cost for the protestors.<sup>19</sup>

### **Domino Theory**

After analyzing why and how people make the decision to participate in revolutions, the final theory examines the geographical impact on the uprisings in the MENA. The domino theory asserts that changes and or events in one place will cause similar events in other areas close in proximity with one another. This theory has been

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<sup>17</sup> Concessions, Repression, and Political Protest in Iranian Revolution American Sociological Review. 1996. 132-152

<sup>18</sup> How a Single Match an Ignite a revolution. New York Times. <http://www.nytimes.com>

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, "Concessions, Repression, and Political Protest in Iranian Revolution."

associated with foreign policy and political gains in American history under former president Dwight Eisenhower. Eisenhower's "falling domino principle" asserted that a change in one country's political institution would in turn transfer to neighboring countries.<sup>20</sup> During his era of containment, this was crucial for the U.S. in spreading democracy to avoid the spread of communism by the Soviet Union. Decades later the promotion of democracy has continued through the lenses of the domino theory. The democracy domino theory carried out in Iraq by former president George W. Bush is discussed further in the chapter one.

In the case of the Arab Spring, Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya are geographically neighboring countries in the MENA. The uprisings, protests and revolutions, happened in a consecutive manner after citizens became aware of what was happening in their neighboring country. Mark Lynch, the creator of term Arab Spring, described the events between 2010 and 2011 as, "something where people who have been struggling and striving in a whole variety of creative and increasingly effective ways for at least a decade broke through."<sup>21</sup> While social media played a major role in the domino effect, activists were able to travel through these neighboring countries to rally support.<sup>22</sup> The domino theory explains how the uprisings influenced and affected each other based solely on geographic relation.

## **Recommendations**

The international community is adapting to the new era and collectively denouncing leaders accused of human rights abuses and social injustices. The actions of

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<sup>20</sup> Leeson, P.T. and Andrea M. Dean. The Democratic Domino Theory: An Empirical Investigation. *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 53, No. 3 (Jul., 2009), pp. 533-551.

<sup>21</sup> Sheikh, A. "Arab Spring experts shares insight on Arab revolutions." *The Lantern*. May 3, 2012. <http://www.thelantern.com> (accessed May 1, 2012).

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

citizens in Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya have encouraged this collectiveness and further increased global awareness. By using the theories of micromobilization, rational choice, and domino, there is clear indication that the Arab Spring is far from over. President Obama mentioned in his remarks on the Middle East North Africa (MENA) that these countries won their independence a long time ago but the people did not.<sup>23</sup> With decades of built up resistance, the world is witnessing a massive wave of social unrest. The remaining oppressive regimes in the Arab world should examine the events of Arab Spring and be proactive in implementing reforms before it is too late.

## **Conclusion**

The theoretical framework to support and explain the revolutions throughout the Arab Spring is the theories of revolution, micromobilization, rational choice, and domino. The analysis of revolution reveals a transformation of culture in which citizens forcefully challenged the existing governments and demanded the removal of dictators in the name of democracy. This transformation was most powerful due to the collectiveness of ideals and shared value amongst the protestors, which in turn resulted in the actual revolutions. The micromobilization theory shows how the people exchanged their ideas, feelings, and gained support to collaborate in protests. Next, the rational choice theory explained why people decided to participate in uprisings due to a shared sentiment of oppression and the knowledge of the benefits in joining the protests. The rational choice theory further explains the bandwagon model that led to the massive crowds of people. Finally, the domino theory provides support for the uprisings being influenced by one another based on geographic location. The reasons for protest and revolution are founded upon the

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<sup>23</sup> Barack, Obama. "Remarks by the President on the Middle East and North Africa." Washington: Office of the Press Secretary, May 19, 2011.

plight of democracy in the Arab Spring. While the theories present the starting point, the analysis divulges further to examine what specific reasons contributed to the events of the Arab Spring.

# **THE REVOLTS AND PROTESTS OF THE ARAB SPRING — BEFORE AMERICA? TUNISIA, EGYPT, AND LIBYA — IRAN**

## **Introduction**

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the world has witnessed massive protests in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, specifically, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, and Iran. The uprisings in these countries have been called, the Arab Spring. The Arab Spring is described as pro-democracy movements to overthrow longstanding oppressive governments.<sup>24</sup> The chain reaction of massive protests throughout the MENA sent shock waves across the Arab world. The uprisings in each country appeared to have influence on one another. However, the question of why the uprisings occurred is crucial to understanding the Arab Spring. The American view of the Arab Spring is linked to the United States (U.S.) led intervention in Iraq in March of 2003, which resulted in the implementation of an Iraqi democracy.<sup>25</sup> Despite this view, the commonality of pre-conditions such as political oppression, poverty, religious and ethnic conflicts present additional reasons for why the uprisings occurred.

This research will examine arguments in support of the conventional wisdom then refute these arguments using the theoretical framework of the literature review. An in-depth study of Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Iran will follow to analyze the pre-conditions of political oppression, poverty, religious and ethnic conflicts that led to the uprisings. The analysis of Iran will act as an outlier this study since it is not an Arab state, has not had a revolution since 1979, and further remained destitute to colonial power. However,

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<sup>24</sup> Zakaria, F.. "How Democracy Can Work in the Middle East." February 13, 2011. <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,2046038,00.html> (accessed February 21, 2012).

<sup>25</sup> Crabtree, S. "Lieberman: Iraq war was initial spark for Arab Spring." *Washington Times*. December 19, 2011. <http://www.washingtontimes.com> (accessed May 5, 2012).



the pre-existing conditions remain prevalent in the Iranian society. In analyzing the pre-existing conditions, there will be a brief examination of the country's histories and the year leading up to the uprisings. The recommendations follow with predictions on what is next for the countries and implications that suggest potential uprisings in the future. The conclusion summarizing the findings in this research and conclude that the Arab Spring occurred for reasons beyond the conventional wisdom such as the pre-existing conditions.

### **U.S.-led Intervention in Iraq**

The Bush Administration's justification for intervening in Iraq has faced major criticism over the years due to the instability of Iraq and the effects of the war that were felt in the U.S. Former president George W. Bush, expressed his reason of the intervention at the American Enterprise Institute's Annual dinner on February 23, 2003. Bush declared Iraq a threat to international security because of the violations of numerous United Nations (UN) Security Council resolutions by continuing to develop nuclear weaponry.<sup>26</sup> In order to eliminate this threat, the Bush Administration specifically felt the need to remove the long-standing dictator, Saddam Hussein from the country.<sup>27</sup> By removing Hussein from the country, the Bush Administration believed that was the first measure in freeing the Iraqi people. Once the U.S. ousted Hussein, a new transitional government was implemented to promote democracy and ensure freedom for the Iraqis.<sup>28</sup> The Bush Administrations vision was for Iraq to become the first model of democracy in

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<sup>26</sup> American Enterprise Institute. "President George W. Bush Speaks at American Enterprise Institute's Annual Dinner." Speech, Washington, 2003.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

the Middle East and other countries in the Arab world would want to follow suit.<sup>29</sup> The theory behind this vision was Bush's democracy domino theory.<sup>30</sup>

Bush's democracy domino theory not only asserted that other countries would want democracy as well but, the ideal was a free Iraqi democracy would result in an overflow of democratic revolutions in the Middle East. The development of the Iraqi democracy by the U.S. would result in a falling domino effect to "democratize the Middle East."<sup>31</sup> The ideology underlying domino theory is that the political transformation in one country will in turn spread and promote change in neighboring countries. The domino theory analyzed in the literature review supported the series of massive protests that sparked the revolutions in the neighboring countries of Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya. Bush's goal in the democracy domino theory was explained as,

*"A new regime in Iraq would serve as a dramatic and inspiring example of freedom for other nations in the region. A free Iraq can be a source of hope for all the Middle East."*<sup>32</sup>

Bush's ideology was endorsed and supported by former Vice President, Dick Cheney, former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Senator Joseph Lieberman of Connecticut.<sup>33</sup> Cheney appeared on Fox News in August of 2011 and was asked if the Arab Spring is a direct result of the U.S. presence in Iraq, he adamantly said the events in the Arab world are a result of U.S. bringing democracy to Iraq.<sup>34</sup> During an interview with USA Today in October of 2011, Rice said the ousting of repressive governments in

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Phillips, D. "America's role in the Arab Spring." *thedailynewsegypt*. February 15, 2012. <http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com> (accessed May 1, 2012)

<sup>31</sup> Peter Leeson and Andrea Deean

<sup>32</sup> Ibid, "America's role in the Arab Spring."

<sup>33</sup> Seitz-Wald, Alex. *Cheney Credits Iraq War For Helping To Start Arab Spring*. August 31, 2011. <http://thinkprogress.org> (accessed May 1, 2012).

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

the Arab Spring stemmed from Bush's "freedom agenda," to promote democracy in the Middle East.<sup>35</sup> Senator Lieberman told reporters in December of 2011, he believed the U.S. ability to remove Saddam Hussein from power in 2003, led to the uprisings in the Arab Spring because it showed that dictators could be overthrown.<sup>36</sup>

The weakness in Bush's democratic domino theory lies in the inability of the theory to acknowledge the reverse outcome of the domino effect. The ideology behind the theory anticipates that an increase in one country's democracy will result in an increase in neighboring countries' democracies.<sup>37</sup> Further the outcome is an increased set of democracies in the world. However, if democracy decreases in one country, then the democracy in the neighboring countries may decrease as well, which results in an overall downturn in global democracy.<sup>38</sup> While the deterioration of global democracy may be a radical critique to the democratic domino theory, the impact of the theory has been marginal with regards to the Middle East. In support of this critique, there was a study conducted that analyzed democratic changes in "130 countries for the century and a half between 1850 and 2000."<sup>39</sup> The results indicated only about 11% of neighboring countries' changes in democracy were witnessed.<sup>40</sup> Further out the 130 countries, democratic changes implemented by foreign military intervention had an even less significant impact on democracy in the neighboring countries. The results are further justified in the case of Iraq's neighbors Syria, Lebanon, and others. The crisis in Syria witnessed later in the Arab Spring proved the Iraqi democracy implemented by the U.S.

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<sup>35</sup> Keen, Judy. "Rice reflects on Bush tenure, Gadhafi in new memoir." *USA Today*. 30 October, 2011. <http://www.usatoday.com> (accessed April 25, 2012).

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, Lieberman: Iraq war was initial spark for Arab Spring."

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, The Democratic Domino Theory: An Empirical Investigation"

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

did nothing in promoting and or spreading democracy for the region. The historical Baath governing party has violently suppressed religious conflicts and regional opposition. During the Arab Spring on 2011 and 2012, the government employed violent attacks using military tanks, massive arrests and gunfire to contain the protests inspired by Tunisia, Egypt and Libya.<sup>41</sup> The U.S. hesitation militarily intervening in Syria was backed partially by the lessons learned from Iraq, the amount of instability in the region, and the Israeli conflict that would arise. Therefore, the reverse outcome of Bush's democratic domino theory provides more impact on foreign policy implications than the impact on a democratized Middle East.

The next factor in the U.S. promotion of democracy in Iraq resulting in the events of the Arab Spring is linked to the time difference. In 2003, the U.S. intervened in Iraq, in 2009 there were massive protests because of the elections turnout in Iran, and in 2010 the uprisings in Tunisia occurred. David Phillips, Director of the program on Peace-Building and Rights at Columbia University Institute for the Study of Human Rights, in "America's role the Arab Spring" describes how Bush believed his theory would be proven by the future events in the Middle East.<sup>42</sup> However, Phillips argues Bush's theory has not held up because of the renewed violent situation almost a decade after the U.S. intervention in Iraq.<sup>43</sup> The transitional government after Saddam Hussein ignited more violence and continued the instability in the area.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Jager, Colin. Crossing the Line: Blasphemy, Time, and Anonymity. *Qui Parle*, Vol. 22, No. 2 (Spring/Summer 2014), pp. 1-30.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, "America's role in the Arab Spring."

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

<sup>44</sup> Ajami, Fouad. "Five myths about the Arab Spring." *Washington Post*. January 12, 2012. <http://www.washingtonpost.com> (accessed May 5, 2012).

In Rashid Khalidi's article called "The Arab Spring," he mentions there have been patterns in the Arab world that reveal deeper internal problems plagued by foreign intervention, which cannot be solved right away with democracy.<sup>45</sup> Khalidi's assessment does not present the case for a better type of government, instead he analyzes a history of foreign intervention both European and Western to explain the how democracy is not the sole solution for the Arab Spring.<sup>46</sup> The U.S. intervention in Iraq is an example of Khalidi's sentiment. According to a U.S. report on Iraq in September of 2002, Saddam Hussein violated UN resolutions about nuclear weapons, human abuses, and economic sanctions from the early 1990s to the U.S. intervention in 2003.<sup>47</sup> For example, one of the agreements under the UN Security Council Resolution 1284 called for Iraq to deliver medical supplies and humanitarian goods to Iraqis in need without discrimination.<sup>48</sup> On the contrary, Iraq used UN funded humanitarian trucks for military and construction purposes to build facilities for nuclear weapons.<sup>49</sup> Therefore, Saddam Hussein's reign in Iraq posed a threat to international security decades prior to the U.S. intervention.

Bush's democracy domino theory underestimates the ability of Middle Easterners and further presents a limited justification for the uprisings. Phillips argues in his article that Middle Easterners denounce the claims of U.S. politician's Iraqi democracy in any way acted as motivation for them to act on their sovereignty in the uprisings of the Arab Spring.<sup>50</sup> The Zogby Research Services conducted polling surveys in multiples countries of the MENA about the Arab Spring, other developments in the

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<sup>45</sup> Khalidi Rashid. "The Arab Spring." *The Nation*. March 3, 2011.

<http://www.thenation.com/article/158991/arab-spring> (accessed March 26, 2012).

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, Khalidi.

<sup>47</sup> *A Decade of Deception and Defiance*. Report, Washington: White House Background Paper on Iraq, 2002.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, *A Decade of Deception and Defiance*.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, "America's role in the Arab Spring."

region, and U.S. troop's withdrawal from Iraq.<sup>51</sup> When the survey asked who benefited more from the war, 39 percent of Iraqis and a significant number of Jordanians believed the U.S. received the most benefit.<sup>52</sup> Amongst all the findings of the survey, James Zogby explained the different results in attitudes of U.S. intervention in Iraq between Shias and Sunnis by stating:

*"42 percent of the Iraqi people felt that the war had left them worse off, but 60 percent of the Kurdish population felt the American intervention had left them better off. Similarly, Kurds believed that the United States has had a largely positive effect on Iraqi safety and security, while Shias noted only a slightly positive impact, and Sunnis viewed the effect as negative overall."*<sup>53</sup>

Zogby findings provide support for the pre-existing condition of religious and ethnic conflicts based on the differentiating responses from the Shias, Sunnis and the Kurds. Further Zogby views Tunisia as a better example of democracy than Iraq.<sup>54</sup> Fouad Ajami, former director of the Middle East Studies program at The John Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), wrote article entitled "Five Myths of the Arab Spring."<sup>55</sup> Out of the five myths Ajami denounced the conventional wisdom of the U.S. led intervention in Iraq has led to the Arab Spring because Saddam Hussein was forced out by the U.S. and as a result the Shiite majority consumed power.<sup>56</sup> The Arab Spring is a result of uprisings by the people and Saddam Hussein led the Shiite majority while he held power.<sup>57</sup> Therefore, there was no change to the political culture

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<sup>51</sup> Zogby Research Services. "Public Opinion on Iraq and the Arab Spring." Survey, Washington, 2011.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, "Five myths about the Arab Spring."

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

and the religious and ethnic conflicts between the Shiites and Sunnis increased with U.S. presence in Iraq. Based on the evidence presented the study of the Arab Spring must be continued to determine additional factors beyond the U.S. intervention in Iraq that may have caused the Arab Spring.

## **Tunisia**

In 1856, Tunisia gained its independence from French colonial rule. Since then the country had only two leaders Habib Bourguiba (1968-1987) and Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali (1987-2011).<sup>58</sup> Bourguiba was deemed “Supreme Warrior,” after leading Tunisia’s fight for independence from France in 1955.<sup>59</sup> As president, Bourguiba platform aimed to promote modernization through political, social, and economic reforms.<sup>60</sup> Under his leadership, emancipation was granted for women, free education was implemented, and polygamy was abolished.<sup>61</sup> However overtime during his rule, Tunisia’s economy struggled severely which contributed to the political controversy in the region.<sup>62</sup>

After declaring Bourguiba unfit to rule due to his sickness, Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali became president on November 7, 1987, using the constitution to justify his authority.<sup>63</sup> Ben Ali’s beginning platform presented a focus to achieve democracy in Tunisia. In his early years as president, he received accolades for extending political and civil rights, which increased his legitimacy.<sup>64</sup> However, overtime, Ben Ali’s rule was geared more towards creating a police state that exercised complete censorship over

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<sup>58</sup> Micaud, Charles. *Tunisia The Politics of Modernization*. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Zartman, William. *Tunisia The Political Economy of Reform*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc., 1991.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> BBC World News: Obituaries. "Habib Bourguiba: Father of Tunisia." April 6, 2000.

<http://www.bbc.co.uk> (accessed May 3, 2012).

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, *The Geopolitical Repressions of the Tunisian Jasmine Revolution on North Africa*

Tunisians. The political oppression felt by Tunisians started with the restrictions on freedom of speech, press, and the inefficiency in the rule of law.<sup>65</sup> Ben Ali exercised censorship on new publications, shut down Internet access and banned websites from opposition groups.<sup>66</sup> The Tunisian constitution declared the freedoms and civil rights as guaranteed by the law; therefore, Ben Ali, imposed laws and regulations to an extent without having to amend the constitution to exercise control.

Ben Ali's reforms were also proven to be in violation of Tunisia's international human rights obligations.<sup>67</sup> Article 1 and 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, ensures the protection of economic, social and cultural rights including: the right to self-determination of all peoples and the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living.<sup>68</sup> As of 2005 the Central Intelligence Agency, World Fact book, the percentage of unemployed youths from 15 to 24 was 31.4 percent males and 29.3 percent females.<sup>69</sup> In the Southwest region Gafsa, people faced poverty, poor living conditions, and unsafe drinking water due to the pollution by the phosphate industry.<sup>70</sup> While the issues surrounding poverty were a major problem throughout Tunisia, social unrest from religious and ethnic conflicts plagued society.

Arabs and Muslims occupy the majority ethnic and religious groups, while Jews and Christians represent the minority in Tunisia.<sup>71</sup> From the early rulings of Bourguiba, there were a series of initiatives to reform religious law, practice, and family life.<sup>72</sup>

Bourguiba launched campaigns and repression against Islam. Ben Ali continued the

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, "Micromobilization, Social Media, and Coping Strategies: Some Dutch Experiences."

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, Behind Tunisia's 'Economic Miracle': Inequality and Criminalization of Protest."

<sup>68</sup> Ibid, "Micromobilization, Social Media, and Coping Strategies: Some Dutch Experiences."

<sup>69</sup> —, *Tunisia*. April 2012. <http://www.cia.gov> (accessed May 3, 2012).

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, Behind Tunisia's 'Economic Miracle': Inequality and Criminalization of Protest."

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, *Tunisia*.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, *Tunisia The Politics of Modernization*.



sentiment of his predecessor by repressing Islam and promoting his secularist views as superior. Reports indicate Tunisians were not allowed to wear religious dressings in public places.<sup>73</sup> In addition, Muslim worshippers were allotted a set amount of time for prayer, while other opposition political groups were banned.<sup>74</sup> The tactics implemented by Tunisian dictators was in attempt to suppress the practice of Islam and further subdue any religious opposition. However, the efforts that were once viewed as instituting secularism had little to no impact on reforming the Islamic culture in society. The result of such tactics increased the growing opposition of the regimes.

The Tunisian government faced an ongoing struggle to provide equal opportunities, increasing marginalization, and regional inequalities. Furthermore, the political oppression, poverty, religious and ethnic conflicts throughout Tunisia's history was indication for potential instability in the future. In December of 2010, Mohamed Bouazizi, a fruit vendor, set himself on fire in front of a government building after being beaten by police and prohibited to sell his goods.<sup>75</sup> The news of Bouazizi outraged Tunisians and sparked the beginnings of massive protests. By January of 2011, unable to control the explosive protests, Ben Ali and his family fled to Saudi Arabia and denounced his presidency of twenty-three years.<sup>76</sup> The Tunisian government did not waste any time implementing an interim government, legalizing political parties and planning elections all within the same year. These proactive measures, led by Prime Minister Ghannouchi, were implemented in hopes of satisfying the angry protesters. Ben Ali's Rally for Constitutional Democracy (RCD) party was eradicated by a court order and the countries

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid, *Tunisia The Political Economy of Reform*.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, "Behind Tunisia's 'Economic Miracle': Inequality and Criminalization of Protest."

<sup>75</sup> Ibid, "How a Single Match an Ignite a revolution."

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

first democratic elections were set to happen in October of 2011. The purpose of the elections was to elect new members into parliament that would become part of the National Constituent Assembly, who would be responsible for drafting the new constitution.<sup>77</sup> The election resulted in the Ennahda Islamist party winning more than half of the seats in parliament. By December of 2011 a new president, Moncef Marzouki, was elected and the leader of the Ennahda party, Hamadi Jebali, was affirmed as Prime Minister.

## **Egypt**

Between January and February of 2011, the uprisings in Tunisia influenced Egyptians to charge to Tahrir Square and demand that then President Hosni Mubarak step down from power.<sup>78</sup> Mubarak ruled in Egypt from October of 1981 until February of 2011, when he resigned from presidency.<sup>79</sup> Anwar Sadat, Mubarak's predecessor, was assassinated on October 14, 1981.<sup>80</sup> Critics of the Sadat's regime believed the country looked outside its borders for solicitation on its own social and economic organization.<sup>81</sup> Throughout the history of Egypt, there are deeply rooted problems of corruption and elitism. According to the World's Fact book 2005 estimate, 20 percent of Egyptians lived below the poverty line.<sup>82</sup> While in 2007 an estimated 17.2 percent males and 47.9 percent females were unemployed youths between the ages of 15 to 24.<sup>83</sup> For more than 30 years Mubarak, under a quasi-military rule, implemented what was known as an "emergency

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid, "Middle East Protests: Country by Country."

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> International Center for Transitional Justice. *Egypt*. 2012. <http://www.ictj.org> (accessed May 5, 2012).

<sup>80</sup> Ikram, Khalid. *The Egyptian Economy, 1952-2000*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2006.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid, "Middle East Protests: Country by Country."

<sup>82</sup> —. *Egypt*. April 2012. <http://www.cia.gov> (accessed May 1, 2012).

<sup>83</sup> Ibid, *Egypt*.

law.”<sup>84</sup> Under the emergency law the state has the immediate power to arrest or restrict fundamental freedoms of Egyptians at any time.<sup>85</sup> Mubarak repressed the freedom of speech for Egyptian newspapers, journalist, and or any opposition published about his regime.<sup>86</sup> The political oppression of Mubarak was backed by a corrupt electoral system, where the National Democratic Party (NDP) held the majority.<sup>87</sup>

Another issue in Egypt was the religious and ethnic conflicts. The Egyptian majority is comprised of mostly Sunni Muslims, while Coptic Christians represent the minority.<sup>88</sup> Egypt’s Sunni Muslim occupies approximately 90%, while Christians consisting of Coptic, Orthodox, and Anglican represent only about 10% of the population.<sup>89</sup> The constitution of Egypt established Islam as the state religion, but mentions individuals may exercise freedom of religious practices. However, Egyptians did not have the full freedom to practice as the constitution states. For example, Muslims and Christian were not allowed to convert to the other faith and the Mubarak regime maintained an intense Islamic rule over all Egyptians.<sup>90</sup> Amnesty International reported the regime even denied construction and repairs to Christian churches.<sup>91</sup> Mubarak’s mistreatment of Christians made them more susceptible to targeted violent attacks from Islamist extremist groups.<sup>92</sup> In May of 2011, several thousand Muslims from a well-known extremist group, tried to break into St. Mena Church, looking for a woman

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Sherry, Virginia. "Egypt: The Christian Minority." *Human Rights Watch/Middle East* 6, no. 2 (November 1994).

<sup>86</sup> Ibid, "Middle East Protests: Country by Country."

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, "Egypt: The Christian Minority."

<sup>89</sup> Ibid, "Egypt."

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

accused of converting from Christianity to Islam.<sup>93</sup> The division Mubarak created was deeply rooted throughout his reign; therefore, the religious and ethnic conflicts have continued even after the revolution.

## **Libya**

Muammar el-Qaddafi led the Free Unionist Officers, in overthrowing the monarchy held by King Idris, and seized power on September 1, 1969.<sup>94</sup> Qaddafi declared Libya a free self-governing republic in his speech shortly after taking power:

*“She will advance on the road to freedom, the path of unity and social justice, guarantying equality to all her citizens...honest employment, where injustice and exploitation are banished, where no one will count himself master and servant, and where all will be free, brothers within a society in which, with God’s help, prosperity and equality will be seen to rule us all.”*<sup>95</sup>

The context of his speech was positive, yet Qaddafi’s reforms would prove to be quite opposite. Under Qaddafi’s orders, the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) implemented bans on the consumption of alcohol, publications of public entertainment, and or anything they considered to be vulgar.<sup>96</sup> The approach of the regime to promote unity was through the practices of Islam.<sup>97</sup> The early socioeconomic reforms aimed to redistribute wealth, increase education, and address gender equalities.<sup>98</sup> However, the radical reforms had a direct negative effect on Qaddafi’s development goals. One of his earliest reforms that led to early opposition groups was the decision to eliminate the

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<sup>93</sup> Kirkpatrick, D. "Egypt's Christian Fear Violence as Changes Embolden Islamists." *The New York Times*. May 30, 2011. <http://www.nytimes.com> (accessed May 3, 2012).

<sup>94</sup> Simons, Geoff. *Libya: The Struggle for Survival*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1993.

<sup>95</sup> St John, R. B. *Libya Continuity and change*. New York: Routledge, 2011.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid

private sector, which stopped real estate development, and heavily impacted the middle class.<sup>99</sup>

By the mid-1970s, Qaddafi began to question the religious elites because they were the center of Islam. Overtime, he destroyed the power base, which was the religious elites, challenged Islamic legal institutions, and suspended laws that he felt would hinder the socioeconomic reforms. The practice of private law was outlawed, which turned all lawyers into state employees, and the court system was changed into a parallel system that diminished the right to appeal.<sup>100</sup> This set of reforms marked a long period with a repressive justice system, which led to the heightened tensions in the 1990s. As the opposition groups developed at an alarming rate, Qaddafi began to inflict harsher tactics to suppress the groups.

Libyans were forced to live by Qaddafi's infamous Green Book that was a composition of his deals on how politics, economics and society should be governed. The Green Book was based on principles of Socialism, Islam and Arabism that essentially led to his demise.<sup>101</sup> Qaddafi viewed himself as a higher being destined to not only rule Libya but also a much greater purpose. This personality trait was intertwined with how Qaddafi governed Libya. The first volume of the Green Book titled, "The Solution the Problem of Democracy," declared the most plausible form of democracy is one in which the masses align themselves in popular congresses, peoples committees and professional associations.<sup>102</sup> In turn, Qaddafi stepped down from all official positions and declared

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid, *Libya: The Struggle for Survival*.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

himself the “Guide to the Era of the Masses.”<sup>103</sup> Qaddafi implemented these reforms to demonstrate his pursuit of democracy based on the Green Book. While Qaddafi resigned from the actual positions, he maintained control over the people committees and popular congresses concerning when they held meetings and further what they even discussed. The irony of Qaddafi’s Green Book democratic reforms was in that they did nothing to secure democracy for Libyans; instead, the reforms only strengthened to his centralized power. In addition it is important to note that Qaddafi was known as the longest reigning dictator of the Arab world prior to his death. Qaddafi did so by eliminating political competition and further removing any opposition to the regime.

The second volume of the Green Book known as “The Solution of the Economic Problem,” was a mixture of socialist and capitalist economic ideals.<sup>104</sup> Qaddafi kept Libya’s oil-rich economy tightly sealed from foreign influence and even Libyans. During his reign there were economic reforms, but they failed to reach the masses. The Libya elites benefited from the economic reforms, but Qaddafi’s children really reaped the benefits of Libyans economy.<sup>105</sup> Libya did receive foreign investments in energy, Tripoli began to exhibit an upcoming metropolitan city; however, poverty remained very high.

Qaddafi’s reforms exhibited a trend to develop a centralized power. Further Qaddafi’s family members held control over the political and economic systems of Libya. In addition, Libyans never felt the freedom of speech, press, or religious practice, as Qaddafi promised in the beginning of his regime.<sup>106</sup> The countries heavily dependent oil

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<sup>103</sup> Ibid, *Libya Continuity and change*.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid, *Libya: The Struggle for Survival*.

economy led to increased periods of unemployment.<sup>107</sup> Qaddafi employed foreign workers, contractors, and technicians for the oil industry.<sup>108</sup> In 2005, 13 percent of Libyans were unemployed in the local population of approximately 5.5 million and half of that percentage was under the age of 20.<sup>109</sup>

In February of 2011, Libyans had finally had enough of the Qaddafi regime, and massive protests broke out aimed to remove Qaddafi from power. Qaddafi's military fought hard to repress the rebels but as time went on the rebels appeared in Tripoli more violent. With the massive battle between the military and the rebels, headlines spread throughout the international news of the growing number of civilian casualties. The UN Security Council approved a resolution to allow the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) air strikes in Libya, to improve civilian protection. In October of 2011 news headlines, reported Qaddafi and his eldest son were pronounced dead after reportedly trying to flee during an NATO air strike.<sup>110</sup>

## **Iran**

The case of Iran presents an outlier to the other countries presented in this research because despite the massive protests over the election turnout in 2009, the Iranians have not had a since 1979. The massive protests in June of 2009 were the reaction of outraged Iranians after President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was victorious in another election.<sup>111</sup> Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei immediately responded to the people in launching an investigation of the election; however, he later

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<sup>107</sup> Ibid, *Libya Continuity and change*

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> —. *Libya*. April 2012. <http://www.cia.gov> (accessed May 1, 2012).

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> "Iranian Presidential Election Erupts in Protest." *PBS*. June 16, 2009. <http://www.pbs.org> (accessed May 4, 2012).

reported there were no indications of any corrupt activities.<sup>112</sup> President Ahmadinejad ordered police to brutally suppress the opposition movements and increased the security forces. The massive protest continued through 2009 and revealed other issues within the Iranian governance.

According to the Department of State Report in 2008, there was legal and societal discrimination against women, ethnic and religious minorities.<sup>113</sup> The Shia occupies the majority of Iranians and the minority groups include Baha'i, Christian, Zoroastrian, Sunni Muslim, and Jewish communities.<sup>114</sup> The non-Muslim religious minorities have reported imprisonment, harassment, and intimidation based on their religious beliefs.<sup>115</sup> President Ahmadinejad has implemented formal sanctions of discrimination, in the areas of employment, education, and housing. The repression is currently hindering Iranians from overthrowing their government because Ahmadinejad security forces have been able to contain the protests since June 2009. The Iranians are still facing political oppression, repression, dealing with religious and ethnic conflicts while battling poverty all at once. According to the International Monetary Fund, Iran's labor force is experiencing the highest brain drain in the Middle East because hundreds of thousands skilled and educated Iranians leave the country every year to find jobs in the U.S. and Europe because of President Ahmadinejad oppressive regime.<sup>116</sup> However, just as the other countries in the Arab Spring, the Iranian government will be forced to implement infrastructure changes beyond the removal of Ahmadinejad. With the reports of nuclear

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> U.S. Department of State. *Iran, International Religious Freedom Report*. Department of State, 2008.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> International Monetary Fund. "Islamic Republic of Iran: Selected Issues." Report, 2008.



developments and human rights abuses, the Iranian government will be faced with too many sanctions and minimal international financial assistance. Unfortunately, the Iranian government does not appear willing to implement democratic reforms for the people; instead, the government is more focused on establishing its presence as a nuclear power.

### **Recommendations and a look ahead**

After researching the protests and revolutions in the Arab Spring, the first recommendation for Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya is to establish social stability. The transitional governments should be comprised of leaders from varying opposition groups willing to collaborate and promote initiatives to establish unity. As discussed in this research, protests continued after the former dictators left power in all three countries. Therefore, the transitional governments must establish reforms that will satisfy the people, in order to gain political legitimacy. Further it is imperative for all of the countries to develop internal solutions for their problems and present those needs to foreign actors such as the U.S. The goal is to allow the country's to present their needs versus having foreign involvement in every aspect of the transitional governments such as in Iraq. Countries such as Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya should have goal-oriented deadlines. The date of elections, installation of officers, and budgets for upcoming fiscal years should be strategically planned. There is a need to get all of the countries on the same progression rate to promote the spread of democracy in the MENA. In turn, there will be an increase in neighboring partnerships to deter unwanted foreign involvement.

Skilled workers that have fled these countries over the last three years due to violence need to have incentives to go back to their home countries. After such high protests, there is a need to stabilize society to allow for economic growth. In order to

increase citizen participation, there can be grant opportunities every six months for non-government organizations (NGOs) that are building awareness and advocating for participation. This will give smaller NGOs a chance to make an impact on their society. The process of democratization will not be overnight for any of the countries. In order for any democratic reforms to be sustainable, they will have to be developed by each country based on their particular needs. The countries of the Arab Spring will have to develop a proper infrastructure and construct their own way of democracy.

## **Conclusion**

Bush's democracy domino theory asserted that as a result of America's military occupation, an increase in democracy for one country, in turn would result in an increase of democracy for the neighboring countries. Further this would overall spread democracy for the Middle East.<sup>117</sup> Despite the conventional wisdom presented, the pre-conditions of political oppression, poverty, religious and ethnic conflicts are reasons for the uprisings beyond the U.S. presence in Iraq. The critics of the Arab Spring claim the U.S. intervention in Iraq is the direct effect for the uprisings are conservative Bush Supporters such as Rice, Cheney, and Lieberman. The protesters in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Iran voiced the years of struggle under their former regime as political oppression, poverty, religious and ethnic conflicts. In Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, the dictators all campaigned on a platform for democracy to legitimize their power and gather support. However, overtime each dictator began to implement reforms to centralize the power of the state, deter economic opportunities in favor of elites, eliminate political opposition and further manipulate the fundamental rights and freedoms of their people. The U.S. intervention in Iraq may have encouraged the spirit of protest in the citizens of the Arab Spring;

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid, The Democratic Domino Theory: An Empirical Investigation.”

however, the uprisings of the Arab Spring were a direct result of the people taking back their sovereignty. As the countries reach the end of 2011, it will be interesting to see the progress of democracy throughout the Arab Spring. Since Tunisia was the first revolution, will the country be the first to establish a Muslim democracy? The initiation of democratic transitions in Arab Spring will fuel and test the current debate on compatibility between Islam and Liberal democracy.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **CAN ISLAM AND LIBERAL DEMOCRACY COEXIST?**

**A CASE STUDY OF TUNISIA, EGYPT, AND TURKEY**

## **CAN ISLAM AND LIBERAL DEMOCRACY COEXIST?**

### **A CASE STUDY OF TUNISIA, EGYPT AND TURKEY**

#### **Introduction**

The peak of the Arab Spring in Tunisia and Egypt is now over as the former authoritarian leaders have left the countries and transitional governments have been implemented in pursuit of democracy. The onset of the democratic transitions has been troubling for both countries. While the authoritarian leaders are no longer present in Tunisia and Egypt, the fear of Islamic regimes reemerging remains. Historically, Islamic countries in the region have been characterized by authoritarian rule, leaving many to question whether Islam and democracy are even compatible.<sup>118</sup> Despite the conventional Islam and democracy are compatible; however, the marginal presence of Muslim democracies is due to the internal and external factors of political Islam, power, and past and present foreign intervention. Further the question of compatibility lies between challenges of Islam and liberal democracy. Today, the Muslim democracies of Turkey, Indonesia, Malaysia and Bangladesh, indicate the possibility of Islam and democracy coexisting, yet why are there not more Muslim democracies.<sup>119</sup> In addition to what factors have contributed to the inability of Islamic countries to establish and sustain democracy?

Turkey has been widely disputed as the most comparable non-Arab model for countries of the Arab Spring based on its geographic location, history, and current democracy.<sup>120</sup> In Turkey, the process of democratization involved centuries of strict

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<sup>118</sup> Rice, D. E. (1999). *Islamic Political Culture, Democracy, and Human Rights: A Comparative Study*. Westport: Praeger Publishers.

<sup>119</sup> Nasr, V. (2005, April). The Rise of Muslim Democracies. *Journal of Democracy*, 16(2).

<sup>120</sup> Kenyon, P. (2012, January 6). *The Turkish Model: Can It Be Replicated?* Retrieved from <http://www.npr.org>

military rule and violent tactics to ensure secularism.<sup>121</sup> Turkey has faced claims of discrimination, terrorism and repression against religious minorities and Muslims throughout its history. Currently, the country is pursuing more democratic reforms and human rights initiatives, as it goes through the process of accession to the European Union (EU). However, the Turkish military has played a significant role in implementing secularism and further suppressing religious extremists. Therefore, the discussion of current politics in Turkey present implications on what is necessary to sustain a Muslim democracy.

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the internal and external factors of political Islam, power, and past and present foreign intervention to determine why Islamic countries have struggled in establishing and further sustaining democracies. The factors of past and present foreign intervention revolve around European colonization and the United States (U.S.) promotion of liberal democracy. The theories Islam, liberal democracy and liberal autocracy are examined too establish a theoretical framework. The theory of Islam is discussed through universally accepted principles of the religion versus its implications as an ideology, known as political Islam. Next, the analysis of liberal democracy reveals the initial conflicts that arise for Islamic countries in pursuing democracy. The theory of liberal autocracy presents examples of how and why previous democratic reforms by authoritarian leaders have not been sustainable. The theory of liberal autocracy is directly related to the former authoritarian regimes in Egypt and Tunisia. The discussion of former authoritarian regimes in Egypt and Tunisia reveal the challenges both countries will have to overcome in their democratic transitions. The final

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<sup>121</sup> Taspinar, O. (2012). Turkey the New Model? In R. Wright, *The Islamists Are Coming: Who They Really Are* (pp. 127-136). Washington: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars & United States Institute for Peace.

section of this chapter examines the Turkish democracy to determine how the factors of secularism and modernization have contributed to its sustainability and if they can be employed in Egypt and Tunisia. In doing so, this research will conclude with factors from Turkey that can act recommendations for both Egypt and Tunisia in their democratic transitions.

### **Islam vs. Political Islam**

Islam is a monotheistic religion founded upon the belief of one God, *Allah*, who sent prophets down to earth to teach people how to live. The seal of the prophets is Muhammad. Islam is practiced through five pillars: belief, worship, fasting, almsgiving, and pilgrimage.<sup>122</sup> The foundations of faith in Islam are based on Allah's revelations to Muhammad, which are revealed in the Quran, along with the reports on Muhammad's life, known as the Traditions or hadith.<sup>123</sup> The Traditions were not written down in the beginning and once Muhammad passed, his followers were eager to compile all the stories.<sup>124</sup> The Sunna or custom of the Prophet is the founding of Islamic jurisprudence under the Quran.<sup>125</sup> The sharia, a combination of the Sunna and Quran, is a set of rules that govern a Muslim society. The complexity of Islam throughout history is due to the evolving interpretations, imperialism, and Islamic leaders. The general understanding of Islamists constantly circumstantial and developing, which is only one factor among others that affect the possibilities for liberalization and democratization.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> PBS. (n.d.). *PBS-Islam: Empire of Faith*. Retrieved June 4, 2013, from <http://www.pbs.org/empires/islam/index.html>

<sup>123</sup> Ibid, *PBS-Islam: Empire of Faith*.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

The debate over the compatibility of Islam and Democracy stems from critics predicting the consequences of political Islam resurfacing based on the last two decades of authoritarian regimes in the Arab world.<sup>127</sup> Political Islam can be traced back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century as a form of resistance from the controlling European powers in relation to culture and economics.<sup>128</sup> In a general context, political Islam is the belief that Islam presents important claims on how politics and society should be governed; therefore, should be infused in the contemporary Arab world.<sup>129</sup> However, more specifically political Islam is a systemic tool used by groups, individuals, and organizations in pursuit of their own political interests. Greg Barton, author of “Jemah Islamiyah: Radical Islamism in Indonesia,” describes the two sides of political Islam as:

*“At one extreme are those who would merely like to see Islam accorded proper recognition in national life in terms of national symbols. At the other extreme are those who want to see the radical transformation of society and politics, by whatever means, into an absolute theocracy.”*<sup>130</sup>

The actions pursued on either side of political Islam are dependent on the context of the individual, group, and or organization political objectives. The regimes of the Arab Spring had a history of suppressing Islamic organizations political activities by denying them the right to legal party status. As a result, some Islamic organizations became violent and others remained apolitical until they were able to obtain legal party status.

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<sup>127</sup> Davidson, K. (2013, March 21). *Democracy Index 2013: Global Democracy At A Standstill, The Economist Intelligence Unit's Annual Report Shows* . Retrieved 10 2013, April, from HUFF Post WORLS: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/03/21/democracy-index-2013-economist-intelligence-unit\\_n\\_2909619.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/03/21/democracy-index-2013-economist-intelligence-unit_n_2909619.html)

<sup>128</sup> Ayoob, M. (2008). *The Many Faces of Political Islam* . Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

<sup>129</sup> Graham Fuller, *The Future of Political Islam*, Palgrave, New York, 2003,p. xi.

<sup>130</sup> Barton, G. (2005). *JemahIslamiyah: Radical Islamism in Indonesia*. Singapore: Ridge Books.



The impact and actions of Islamic groups vary in different countries. The manifestations of political Islam are linked to interpretations of religious precepts, local and political cultures. However, Islam has a negative connotation because of the extremist transnational organizations such as al-Qaeda that act politically dramatic in the name of Islam, through terrorist activities, which dates back to the origin of Islam.<sup>131</sup> These actions overshadow daily positive political activity in the Arab world. The mainstream Islamist movements operate within national boundaries peacefully to influence society and politics through constitutional means. Further, the Arab world has witnessed Islamic movements that promoted democracy. The trajectory and or future of political Islam are somewhat dependent on international actors, particularly the U.S. involvement in Muslim countries. Islam becomes salient when it is filtered through local conditions and interacts with international actors in a way that augment trends that exist because of domestic factors.<sup>132</sup> The U.S. relationship with several authoritarian regimes in the Muslim world reveals American policies to be hostile to Muslim interests and broadly defined.<sup>133</sup>

Political and religious identities often interrelate, thus making religious affiliation a form of political identity.<sup>134</sup> Authoritarian leaders implemented religious sanctioned titles and institutions as a way to legitimize their own rule. This practice only intensified the separation between Muslims and allowed political Islam to flourish like an opposition ideology under autocratic rule.<sup>135</sup> The history and even current position of the religion-state relations in Islam is plagued by the states domination over the instrumental use of

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid, *The Many Faces of Political Islam*.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid

<sup>134</sup> Scott Hibbard, Religious Politics and secular states: Egypt, India and the U.S.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

religion. As a result, there is a myth that in which Islamists have contributed to a great deal by referencing the sharia in the context of an Islamic state as if the two go together.<sup>136</sup> This is considered a myth because not Muslim countries, particularly in the Arab Spring ruled directly from the sharia in present day such as the Tunisian government. A myth such as the one above place religion at the forefront of politics for Muslim societies and is the reason for their resistant to accepting any democratic reforms. However, the challenge of validating this myth is the lack of consistency from former authoritarian leaders reacting to foreign pressures to implement democratic reforms.<sup>137</sup> In order to further analyze this issue, it is imperative to analyze liberal democracy and how it has been implemented in countries such as Egypt and Tunisia.

### **Liberal Democracy**

Liberal democracies are political systems that ensure equal liberties, rights, and freedoms along with the attributes of equal participation, legitimacy, and political competition.<sup>138</sup> Liberalism is defined as collection of beliefs that advocates for government action to improve social welfare, ensure civil rights and social liberties, and equal opportunity. Further liberalism involves an advocacy for the redistribution of wealth for improvements of welfare for social classes. Therefore, liberal democracy entails protecting liberties, freedoms, and rights for all people through democratic means. Democracy is defined as a system of government which political authority rest in the hands of the people through popular sovereignty. The people elect officials to make decisions on their behalf. Within a democracy there are principles of universal suffrage or the right for all to vote. In a democracy elections are free, fair, multi-party, and encourage

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid, *Democracy and Elections in Africa*.

a high level of political competition. Further the elections are conducted based on the majority rule principle and or open with the freedom of press and speech.

All of these characteristics are essentially make the political culture associated with the U.S. representative democracy. In such as system there is limited government, authority and legitimacy, which are secured in the U.S. The Constitution has outlined guaranteed rights and freedoms, responsibilities of government infrastructures and limitations on power. The fundamental principles of the constitution are popular sovereignty, elected officials by the people, limited government, separation of powers or check and balances, and a system with a separation between state and federal rule.

The liberal democracy witnessed in the U.S. is two-fold with secularism and pluralism. Secularism or the separation between church and state asserts, “that people of different religions and beliefs are equal before law.”<sup>139</sup> Pluralism is a condition in which different religions and beliefs are accepted in society. Therefore secular pluralism is defined as “systems which is not under the control of any religion or singular belief, nor does it give primacy to any religion.”<sup>140</sup> Islamic traditionalist immediately rejects the notion of secularism pluralism. The sharia or Islamic law dictates how society should be governed, what laws are to be enacted, and further places Islam above all other religions.<sup>141</sup> This perspective views majority of Western ideals and institutions as threat to Islamic law and culture. Islamist has capitalized on the various political and economic systems that have proven to be unable to solve society’s problems. Further even in present day, Islamist traditionalist continues their plea for Islamic resurgence. The

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<sup>139</sup> Calo, R. Z. Pluralism, Secularism and the European Court of Human Rights. *Journal of Law and Religion*, Vol. 26, No 1 (2010-2011) pp. 261-260.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Nasr, H. *The Heart of Islam: Enduring Values for Humanity*. Harper Collins. 2014.

Islamist traditionalist has also employed extremist and terrorist attacks in the name of Islam. Throughout Islamic history and even in present day, Muslims have been able to live peacefully amongst religious minorities with the exception of violent conflicts that act as those exceptions are typically brought on by political issues.

The traditionalist view of Islam is will never cease to exist; instead, the challenge lies in removing this view from politics. In addition to the promotion of liberal democracy in the Middle East being conscious of the underlying Islamic culture. Only a few days after former president of Tunisia Zine El Abidine Ben Ali's resignation, then Secretary of State Hillary Clinton encouraged a quick turnaround for democratic elections. Clinton stated, "We look to the Tunisian government to build a stronger foundation for Tunisia's future with economic, social and political reforms."<sup>142</sup> While critics may want to broaden the definition of democracy, the type of democracy encouraged by the U.S. politicians tends to rely heavily on elections and liberalism. The U.S. continues to advocate for democracy in the Arab world, yet their policies and intervention lean more towards liberal democracy for the area. As Fareed Zakaria describes in "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy, "the freedoms that define liberal democracy might be constitutionally liberal; however it is theoretically different from democracy."<sup>143</sup> The history of democracy in the U.S. has been violent, war-torn, and quite illiberal. The slave trade was endorsed by Europeans and slavery continued in North America for decades.<sup>144</sup> Racial segregation and gender discrimination were implemented and allowed in the U.S. centuries after the constitution was drafted. The process of

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<sup>142</sup> Boaz, D. (2011, January 15). *Democracy in Tunisia?* Retrieved April 5, 2013, from CATO Institute: <http://www.cato.org/blog/democracy-tunisia>

<sup>143</sup> Zakaria, F. (1997). The Rise of Illiberal Democracy. *Foreign Affairs*, 76(6), 22-43.

<sup>144</sup> *British Library*. (n.d.). Retrieved April 24, 2013, from The slave trade - a historical background: <http://www.bl.uk/learning/histcitizen/campaignforabolition/abolitionbackground/abolitionintro.html>

establishing a democracy and further inserting liberalism is difficult. Philippe Schmitter, a notable political scientist, describes the inconsistency in liberal democracy as:

*“Liberalism, either as a conception of political liberty, or as a doctrine about economic policy, may have coincided with the rise of democracy. But it has never been immutably or unambiguously linked to its practice.”<sup>145</sup>*

Liberal democracies in Europe and North America were not seen until approximately around the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In recent times, there has been a rise in democracies that are less liberal than the U.S.; however, this is a trend that dates back to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well. Freedom House, a non-government organization (NGO), conducted a survey to evaluate freedom throughout the world by ranking countries on political and civil liberties called Freedom in the World. Freedom in the World 2011 concluded with a consecutive decline in free countries, decrease in the number of electoral democracies (lowest since 1995), and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region continued to have the “lowest levels of democracy in the world.”<sup>146</sup> Based on the Freedom in the World 2011 report, democratic elections are not guarantying freedom or democracy, which reveal a lack of sustainability for democracy. The lack of sustainability could be a result of pressure from the U.S. and Europe to democratize, yet there policies towards this region has not changed significantly enough to rise to the challenge of democracy. Arch Puddington, Director of research at Freedom House, pointed out, “If the world’s democracies fail to unite and speak out in defense of their own value, despots will continue to gain momentum.”<sup>147</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid, The Rise of Illiberal Democracy.

<sup>146</sup> Freedom House. (n.d.). *Freedom in the World: Tunisia*. Retrieved March 15, 2013, from Freedom House Web site: <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2011/tunisia>

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

While Puddington's point is valid, the response and encouragement of the U.S. has not been well received on the MENA front. However, given the history of the U.S. relations throughout the Muslim world, the U.S. must change its approach in seeking to promote liberal democracy in the countries of the Arab Spring and further the Middle East.

Democracy creates political space for minority and or opposition groups that usually would not have a political platform to influence voters or campaign. Even when practiced imperfectly, democracy can create political room for extremist and non-extremist Islamic parties.<sup>148</sup> Democracy shows many faces of political Islam within each country of the Arab Spring.<sup>149</sup> Throughout history, the promotion of liberal democracy by the U.S. has resulted in inconsistent democratic reforms implemented by authoritarian leaders.

### **Liberal Autocracy**

Liberal autocracy is described as a response to U.S. democratic pressures to implement temporary democratic reforms in the name of ensuring religious rights and freedoms.<sup>150</sup> In the Arab world, this was seen through temporary lifts on media sanctions when facing accusations of social injustices from the international community. However, once the pressures died down the authoritarian laws remained intact and allowed the governments to continue their control. Liberal autocracy essentially aids in the government's ability to survive and indirectly control political life. Egypt's former government under Hosni Mubarak was considered a liberal autocracy.<sup>151</sup> Mubarak's liberal reforms in response to U.S. pressure to democratize led to an unbalanced economy

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<sup>148</sup> Ibid, *The Many Faces of Political Islam*.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid, *Developing Democracy: Toward Consolidation*.

<sup>151</sup> Al-Anani, K. (2008, June 24). *Liberal Autocracy in Egypt*. Retrieved December 13, 2012, from Brookings Institution: <http://www.brookings.edu/research/opinions/2008/06/24-egypt-alanani>

that sought to maximize the gains of the ruling elite, which eventually increased poverty in Egypt.<sup>152</sup> Between November and December of 2005, Mubarak permitted the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) to campaign more openly in the parliamentary elections.<sup>153</sup> However, the MB was never granted legal party status. This was a tactic to show Mubarak's willingness to increase political competition and further Egypt's steps towards democratization. Mubarak's regime in Egypt was one of the most relevant examples of liberal autocracy.

Ben Ali's reign in Tunisia is another example of liberal autocracy. In the beginning Ben Ali's regime promoted civil liberties, human rights, and freedom of speech. However, these liberal practices were put to an end leading into the election year of 1989. Ben Ali prohibited Islamist parties from running in the elections and rejected any electoral reforms that would allow "secular opposition parties" to run in the elections.<sup>154</sup> Ben Ali introduced reforms using electoral codes that were merely his way of implementing rules to limit opposition and stopping parties from gaining an effective presence.<sup>155</sup> This practice continued through Ben Ali's reign. By the 1990s, the Islamist parties were believed to have accomplished every measure required by law to gain legal party status; however, Ben Ali continued to deny them of this status.<sup>156</sup> As a result, there was a large bloody protest, which resulted in thousands of Islamists jailed. This bloody conflict led to Ben Ali's government implementing even tighter controls and soon

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<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> *The Muslim Brotherhood - Egypt's Transition*. (n.d.). Retrieved January 2013, 21, from Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2011/10/11/the-muslim-brotherhood>

<sup>154</sup> Alexander, C. (2011, January 14). *Anatomy of an Autocracy*. Retrieved March 15, 2013, from Foreign Policy: [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/01/14/anatomy\\_of\\_an\\_autocracy?print=yes&hidecomments=yes&page=full](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/01/14/anatomy_of_an_autocracy?print=yes&hidecomments=yes&page=full)

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

removing any freedom of speech that existed. Ben Ali instructed his police force to punish any opposition activity that showed support for the Islamists. Media outlets that voiced opposition to the government were banned and business licenses could be revoked if there were uncertainty in the business's allegiance to the state.<sup>157</sup> Ben Ali maintained his power through the ruling Constitutional Democratic Rally (RCD) party and was able to keep the opposition politically silent until the massive protests in the Arab Spring.

The theory of liberal autocracy also shows how imperialism and foreign intervention can have everlasting effects on the country. Adeslam Maghraoui concludes in "Liberalism without Democracy," that liberalism's own cultural implications whether Western or European have negatively impacted the Middle East.<sup>158</sup> The conventional wisdom on the U.S. foreign policy towards the Middle East is founded upon their own liberal, and secular views being the only way to sustain democracy.<sup>159</sup> The U.S., like former European imperial powers sees no contradiction in imposing their views on the country and liberating those citizens. The advocates of liberal democracy fail to acknowledge the "contradiction between liberating the nations and subverting their culture and traditions."<sup>160</sup> Maghraoui asserts that despite the different international actors the strategy or approach towards the Middle East that the same underlying misconception.<sup>161</sup> The U.S. has been aware of the social injustices and human rights abuses within the MENA for decades. At times of chaos and social unrest, such as in the Arab Spring, the U.S. has strongly encouraged democratic reforms for the region. However, this encouragement is backed by a liberal view of democracy, which may not

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<sup>157</sup> Ibid.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid, *Liberalism without Democracy: Nationhood and Citizenship in Egypt 1922-1936*.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.



work for the countries of the Arab Spring. The U.S. must be mindful of their stance on promoting democracy to avoid democratic pressures previously felt by authoritarian leaders to further promote the longevity of new democratic reforms.

## **Egypt**

British colonial rule over Egypt left behind significant implications on Egyptian culture. The British controlled the economy, armed forces and government personnel.<sup>162</sup> The armed forces was kept small because the British feared a large military would result threaten their rule. Colonial Egypt was once fought over between the French and British until a treaty was established on how the region would be divided. The combination of both French and British colonization resulted in an Egyptian society infused with modernization and secularization.<sup>163</sup> However, over time, there was a growing resentment towards the colonial rule that resulted in the development of present day Egyptian nationalism. In addition to the first Islamic political organization known as the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) was established following the end of World War II. The state that followed independence from colonialism was committed to liberalism and secularization.<sup>164</sup> Upon independence, Colonel Gamal Abdul Nasser presented himself as a pro-democratic leader for Egypt.

The case of Egypt shows, successful, and enduring authoritarian regimes maintain power through a balanced use of patronage, exclusionary laws, and the coercive apparatus of the states.<sup>165</sup> In addition to a combination of strategies that secure the existence of contained pluralism within authoritarian regimes and permit them to adopt

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<sup>162</sup> Rowlatt, Mary. The British Egypt. International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944), Vol 48. No. 2. (April 1972.) 345-346.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid

images of liberalization and democratization without conceding to such measures.<sup>166</sup> The balance of power in Egypt between the executive and legislative has always favored the executive throughout its history. From Colonel Gamal Abdul Nasser, Anwar El Sadat, to Hosni Mubarak, there has been a continuous promotion of liberalization that evolved into a series of oppressive politics. Nasser promoted modernization of the economy through the use of a large public sector, bureaucracy, and the mobilization of subordinate classes against the landed elites and private business elites.<sup>167</sup> Sadat's democratization involved depoliticizing the military to liberalize the political system. However, his efforts appeared to be influenced by economic, political priorities.<sup>168</sup> This strategy was reinforced by the nature of Law 40 of 1977, governing political parties. According to this law, political parties can goals, principles, and programs could conflict with public order, national unity, or the sharia.<sup>169</sup>

Mubarak portrayed himself as an advocate of democracy with the view that democracy was the best thing for Egypt's future, and he had no intentions of centralizing the power of the state.<sup>170</sup> However, as time progressed, Mubarak's stance on democracy acted as a tool to legitimize his position and consolidate power. When critics begin to question his democratic reforms, Mubarak's began to claim democracy cannot be achieved overnight and economic development was his priority. Under Mubarak's regime the executive power expanded into controlling elections. There was a continuous renewal of the emergency rule every three years since Sadat's assassination in 1981, which

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid

<sup>167</sup> BBC World. (2013, July 4). Retrieved July 5, 2013, from Egypt's profile: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13313370>

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid, *The Many Faces of Political Islam*.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid, *The Many Faces of Political Islam*.

provided the state with the legal right to control every level of political activity. The government was entitled to monitor activities, which limited Egyptians freedom of expression and assembly. The emergency rule was used to control and contain legitimate political activities such as campaigning. The government would not allow campaign gatherings without permission from the Ministry of Interior.

Mubarak continued to enforce legislation to reduce political competition and participation. According to Law 114 of 1983, the electoral system was changed from the previous individual-candidacy to proportional representation system.<sup>171</sup> The number of constituencies was changed from 176 to 48. All parties would need to gain a minimum of 8 percent of the nationwide vote, in order for its representatives to enter the People's Assembly. If a party did not achieve this minimum percentage, its vote would automatically be credited to the largest party or the National Democratic Party (NDP).<sup>172</sup> This law aimed to exclude independent and minority candidates from gaining any political power.

All the oppressive and containment tactics fueled violence in Egypt. Mubarak's era produced the highest number of unprecedented politically motivated violence involving Islamists.<sup>173</sup> Political Islam resurged with groups who opposed the regime such as the MB. Historically, the MB did not initially reject the established political order when it emerged, but held the belief that Egypt's society was in need of reform to make it fully Islamic in a moral and social sense.<sup>174</sup> In a society where education was limited to a small section of the population, the MBs charitable Islamic education undoubtedly

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<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid, *The Many Faces of Political Islam*.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

contributed to the popularity and expansion across the country.<sup>175</sup> The MBs consistent defense of the national cause for society gained the respect and legitimacy on purely secular terms and beyond their circle of sympathizers. The Mubarak regime did everything to suppress the popular opposition from gaining political ground in Egypt.

In February of 2011, Mubarak's autocratic regime in Egypt proved to be his demise when thousands of protesters gathered in Tahrir Square and demanded that he resign. After his resignation, the response from the international community was overall positive, yet countries such as Iran expressed the need for Egypt to develop their own democracy without foreign intervention. President Obama expressed support for Egyptians, held the military responsible for ensuring a genuine democratic transition, and offered the U.S. assistance as needed.<sup>176</sup> Iran's former president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, sentiment, was abrasive towards the U.S. expressing his support for a new Middle East developing without U.S. intervention, "a place where arrogant powers will have no place."<sup>177</sup> The U.S. past and present intervention in the Middle East have left an underlying anti-American sentiment. While Ahmadinejad was known to be hostile towards the U.S., his response to Mubarak's resignation expressed further that people should have the right to choose their type of government and rulers.<sup>178</sup> At the onset of Mubarak's resignation, the military stepped in immediately to guide the government in its democratic transition. However, the case of Egypt presents a historical problem of power that could potentially resurge given the military's role in politics.

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<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> BBC World News. (2011 24-November). *Middle East Protests: Country by Country*. Retrieved 2012 йил 3-May from <http://www.bbc.co.uk>

<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

## Tunisia

In 1881, Tunisia became the first Arab country to become a colony under French rule. The French implemented a system of absolute power in Tunisia's foreign relations and finances.<sup>179</sup> Tunisia was exploited for all of its land and natural resources. The French created laws that allowed them to buy and lease land. In turn, the French capitalized on farming, the mining industry, and railway and port construction.<sup>180</sup> This resulted in the emergence of poor Tunisian working classes without labor rights. Foreign workers were given favorable positions and colonial bonuses.<sup>181</sup> Overall, the French colonial rule was through national oppression and bureaucratic tyranny. In regards education and religion, the French rule had significant impact with its implementation of Roman Catholic schools, clinics and churches.<sup>182</sup> The French removed the Islam from the education system and further instituted the teachings of Arabic and French. The colonial implementation of secularism continued after independence.<sup>183</sup>

After leading the country to independence, former President Habib Bourguiba remained in office for more than 30 years. Bourguiba was considered a "secular nationalist" prioritizing economic development and women's rights.<sup>184</sup> In November of 1987, Prime Minister Zine El Abidine Ben Ali removed Bourguiba from presidency in a bloody coup and declared himself president.<sup>185</sup> Ben Ali claimed policies set forth by Bourguiba conflicted with his proclaimed democratic plans; therefore, he implemented various reforms in the name of democracy. Ali used his democratic platform to bolster

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<sup>179</sup> Mckay, D.V. The French Tunisia. *Geographical Review*, Vol. 35, No. 3 (July 1945). 368-390,

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

<sup>184</sup> Freedom House. (n.d.). *Freedom in the World: Tunisia*. Retrieved March 15, 2013, from Freedom House Web site: <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2011/tunisia>

<sup>185</sup> Ibid.

his way through elections unopposed.<sup>186</sup> Former cabinet members of Bourguiba's regime remained in power under Ben Ali as a part of his democratic process to employ bureaucratic strategists. Under both Bourguiba and Ben Ali the state appeared to have a strong secular national platform. However, neither leader lived up to their declaratory policy of privatizing religion.

Bourguiba closed a well-known Mosque in the 1970s called al-Zaytunah then issued "circular 108" which banned veiling.<sup>187</sup> Ben Ali reopened the Mosque but banned veiling and the sporting of beards.<sup>188</sup> Later in the 1990s, Ben Ali introduced reforms that were presented as legal or political changes that sought to deepen pluralism within the existing representative bodies. However, these types of reforms appear to be limiting the authoritarian practices while legitimizing their rule.<sup>189</sup> By implementing different political reforms in the name of democracy, Ben Ali tried his best to oppress any political opposition that may arise. Ali's tolerance for Islamist extremist was very low as the government continued to take brutal measures against any resistance. In 2002, after the bombing of a synagogue, the government arrested suspected Islamists in the masses.<sup>190</sup> While Ben Ali's regime was later criticized for its oppressive politics, Tunisia's economy

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<sup>186</sup> BBC News. (2011, June 20). *Profile: Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali*. Retrieved May 15, 2013, from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-12196679>

<sup>187</sup> Sadiki, L. (2008). Engendering Citizenship in Tunisia: Prioritizing Unity Over Democracy. In H. Amirah-Fernandez, & Y. H. Zoubir, *North Africa: Politics, Region, and the Limits of Transformation* (pp. 109-132). Oxon: Routledge.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

<sup>189</sup> Gobe, E. (2010). Deceptive Liberal Reforms: Institutional Adjustments and the Dynamics of Authoritarianism in Tunisia (1997-2005). In E. Kienle, *Democracy Building and Democracy Erosion: Political Change North and South of the Mediterranean* (pp. 93-111). London: Saqi Books.

<sup>190</sup> Brown, R. V., & Spilling, M. (2009). *Cultures of the World Tunisia*. Tarrytown: Marshall Cavendish Benchmark.

grew steadily under his rule. This steady economic growth strengthened ties with the U.S. and EU even as democratic freedoms continued to decrease.<sup>191</sup>

In the later years of rule, Ben Ali eliminated the three-year term limit for president and was re-elected to a fourth five-year term in October of 2004.<sup>192</sup> In order to maintain power, Ben Ali allowed little to no electoral competition through municipal elections. The elections of May 2005 resulted in the ruling Democratic Constitutional Rally (RCD) party gaining 4,098 seats out of 4,366 being contested in the 269 communal electoral districts.<sup>193</sup> Ben Ali's necessity to maintain control of the state was evident in the elections of 2009 when he implemented restrictions on the media and imposed sanctions against bloggers and journalists. According to reports, "the RCD monopolized prime-time advertising and campaigning, while independent journalists and commentators were arrested or assaulted and their publications and even blogs were blocked."<sup>194</sup> Later in 2010, parliament passed a law that deemed any form of opposition undertakings to be provoked by "agents of a foreign power."<sup>195</sup>

The elite of Tunisia sustained their wealth under Ben Ali's regime. Tunisia had a high level of socioeconomic development, cultural consciousness and political sophistication; however, the state maintained control over all private enterprises. During periods of increased violence, the state enforced police surveillance and intimidation tactics. The pattern of state-led oppression has been maintained through a system of social liberalization on one end and political subjugation on the other. Ben Ali's regime relied heavily on the internal factor of power that dictated politics for the area. The era of

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<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid, *Freedom in the World: Tunisia*.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid, *Cultures of the World Tunisia*.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid, *Freedom in the World: Tunisia*.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid.

Ben Ali marked a pattern of oppressive reforms ranged from limiting media publications, journalist, television, education and even religious expression.<sup>196</sup>

As a result of Ben Ali's oppressive regime, a little over a year after being exiled, the former president was indicted on various charges such as embezzlement and drug crimes.<sup>197</sup> However, the dilemma revolving around these charges is that Ben Ali is exiled in Saudi Arabia and the government has yet to grant Tunisia's extradite request.<sup>198</sup> Essentially, the Tunisian government cannot convict Ben Ali of any charges when he is in a foreign country because that is out of their jurisdiction. The Tunisian governments inability to gain access to Ben Ali is only one of the many problems faced in the first year after the Arab Spring. The state of Tunisia during year one has been similar to Egypt's with the societal unrest clashes between Islamic groups and security forces. Despite the electing Human Rights activist, Moncef Marzouki, in the midst of riots from Islamists the government imposed nightly curfews for all citizens.<sup>199</sup>

While the government seemed unable to maintain peace in the region, that did not stop them from continuing to restructure laws and policies post-Ben Ali's regime. The parliamentary elections of October 2011 resulted in the Ennadha party a large number of seats in the National Assembly. The Tunisian National Assembly began meeting to start drafting a new constitution. The Tunisian government faced early criticism of being Islamist-led and their attempts to regain control only seemed to provide support for those claims. As the early revisions of the new draft constitution were

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<sup>196</sup> Ibid, *Freedom in the World: Tunisia*.

<sup>197</sup> Trial of tunisia's ben ali on corruption charges opens. (2011, June 20). *The Telegraph*. Retrieved from <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/tunisia/8586160/Trial-of-Tunisias-Ben-Ali-on-corruption-charges-opens.html>

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid.



released to the media, the revisions seem to lessen women rights.<sup>200</sup> According to BBC World News, the draft constitution referred to women as ‘complementary to men’, whereas the 1956 constitution granted women full equality with man.<sup>201</sup> The Tunisian government seems to have a lot of issues to resolve between maintaining peace in the region with Islamist and drafting a new constitution that does not mirror Ben Ali’s ousted regime. If the government aims to reach any progress in year two after the Arab Spring, then government will have to find a balance between its Islamist and secularist. As the Tunisian National Assembly continues to its work in drafting the constitution, it will be essential for analyzing the new constitution to see if democratic reforms are implemented.

### **A Turkish Model**

Turkey being considered a possible model for countries of the Arab Spring is highly debated by politicians.<sup>202</sup> The case of Turkey is different because the military has acted as the enforcer for democratic and secular reforms, which resulted in fracturing the country’s Islamist base. Overtime there has been an increasing wave of modernization that has resulted in some of the country’s mainstream Islamist party’s willingness to work within the constraints of the constitution.<sup>203</sup> Prior to the election of November 2002 the Western media described the AKP (the Justice and Development party established 2001) as a fundamentalist party; however, after their victory the same media questioned if it was an Islamic or non-Islamic party. The criticism was based on the development of the AKP as a reaction to the former authoritarian regime. Since the 1960s, the AKP is the

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<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

<sup>202</sup> Kenyon, P. (2012, January 6). *The Turkish Model: Can It Be Replicated?* Retrieved from <http://www.npr.org>

<sup>203</sup> Ibid, *The Many Faces of Political Islam*.

sixth pro-Islamic party in Turkey that survived the Constitutional Courts closures of several pro-Islamic parties.<sup>204</sup> Today, the AKP supports Turkey's military alliance with the U.S. and promises to advance Turkey's accession to the EU; however, the AKP does still struggle with the military bureaucracy and official state ideology of secularism.<sup>205</sup>

In order to analyze Turkey's political transformation, it is important to begin with the former Ottoman Empire to understand the ideologies that are embedded in its society. The Turks built a strong and politically stable empire that expanded to Asia, Europe and Africa. Islam at that time was seen as a form of identity, legitimacy, and unity for the Turks. A former practice of the Ottomans was to wage Gaza wars or wars in the name of expanding Islam.<sup>206</sup> In present, Turkey this ideology remains at the center-right and the Turkish military. The control of religion was essential to the political agenda and continued in the Republican Turkey.<sup>207</sup> Islam along with other religions has always been subordinate and controlled by the state. This is a major part in the secularization of modern Turkey, which is linked to the Ottoman legacy. During the Ottoman rule under the Sultan, he introduced a series of reforms known as Tanzimat Era from 1830-1860.<sup>208</sup> The reforms were described as modernization through centralization of the legal system, bureaucracies, and education. Education reforms included sending students to countries such as Germany and France to study.<sup>209</sup> As a result, a new class of young educated Turks was created. Some of these reforms were justified in the name of Islam.

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<sup>204</sup> Atasoy, Y. (2005). *Turkey, Islamists and Democracy*. New York: L.B. Tauris& Co Ltd.

<sup>205</sup> Ibid, *Turkey, Islamists and Democracy*.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid.

<sup>208</sup> Taspinar, O. (2012). Turkey the New Model? In R. Wright, *The Islamists Are Coming: Who They Really Are* (pp. 127-136). Washington: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars & United States Institute for Peace.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

In the next century under Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the first president of Turkey, the reforms continued in the name of modernity with the creation of the Diyanet İşleri Başkanlığı or the Presidency of Religious Affairs after the elimination of the caliphate.<sup>210</sup> The Diyanet was created solely to control religious affairs with a mission to work within the principles of secularism with the goal of achieving national solidarity and integration.<sup>211</sup> The Turkish state power expanded to owning mosques and appointing religious officials as salaried state employees under the Diyanet. Today, the main function is “to stress that social utility of Islam in the well being of the state and nation.”<sup>212</sup>

The tradition and culture during the Ottoman Empire were different from Atatürk’s vision for Turkey. In short, during the Ottoman period all laws and institutions were linked to Islam versus the ideology of the Kemalist state, which focused on contemporary civilization. The Kemalist state sought to transform Turkey into a civilization that emulated the European society. The Kemalist ideology is based on Turkish nationalism and secularism. Secularism in the Kemalist ideology involves removing religion from the public and placing it under the state’s control.<sup>213</sup> The usage of secularism as a tool to control religion is different from the view of secularism in Western democracies. The view of secularism in Western democracies is the separation between church and state with no interrelation between the two components. The reforms undertaken by Atatürk included attempting to eliminate the usage of Islam as a source of

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<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid, *Turkey, Islamists and Democracy*.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

legitimacy. For example, the education system was reformed to separate it from religion with creating a new non-Islamic alphabet, dress code, and official rest days.

The Kemalist reforms were also influenced by World War II as the international system changed. Later the Cold War presented its own implications on Turkey's security.<sup>214</sup> Turkey implemented a multi-party system similar to the West between 1950 and 1983. The multi-party system left tensions between the elected and unelected military guardians. During this time, it is important to note Turkey's economic struggle and military aid from the U.S. The Turkish Armed Forces (TSK) joined the North American Treaty Organization (NATO) to gain access to resources for education and economic development. The membership also meant "an unelected military and civilian bureaucracy versus the newly elected government."<sup>215</sup> This development presents a clear indication of dual-sovereignty in Turkey that exists today as the AKP operates in efforts to avoid military conflict.

The Turkish military became the enforcers of Turkey's modernization and secularism. In the midst of the Turkish transformation, pro-Islamic parties began to change as well. Under Halil Turgut Özal between 1983 and 1993, there was an evolution of a liberal Islamic movement because of new opportunities and the EU accession.<sup>216</sup> The transformation of political Islam in Turkey can be explained by certain internal and external factors. First, the expansion of opportunities in media and politics opened doors for new roles for Islamic actors. Secondly, the constitutional changes removed the ban on Islamic parties in the political arena. In turn, a new class of young educated Muslim politicians learned to work within the political process of the elite. Lastly, Turkey's

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<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid, *Turkey, Islamists and Democracy*.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

commitment to joining the EU has drastically changed political Islam for the area. Turkey embarked on the criteria set by the Copenhagen Council in the summer of 1993 and since then major political reforms have occurred.<sup>217</sup> The EU accession presented implications on the future of Turkish politics. The trajectory of the EU accession would not have been possible without the military's enforcement. The military maintains a unique role in society through the involvement with civilian politics and ousting democratically elected that have resulted a continuation of positive civilian-military relations. The Turkish government also viewed the EU accession as the last step in modernization.<sup>218</sup>

In 2001, fundamental rights were passed that included freedom of expression, personal liberties, and media. Turkey also pursued "major legal reforms that transformed state-society relations at the expense of the state power."<sup>219</sup> Therefore, a portion of Islamic parties are more willing work within the existing state. This is a major indication that democratic institutions and modern political Islam can coexist. The historical patterns of autocratic regimes show when Islamic political organizations resurge they continue with an agenda to overthrow the government and tend to become violent. Muslim democrats have learned how to frame religious concerns of secularism so they appeal to other religious groups.<sup>220</sup> There has also been a great level of compromise between Muslim democrats and Islamist.

While Turkey has continued on trajectory of progression towards the EU accession, the country now seems to facing a period of stagnation. Reports indicate that Prime Minister Erdogan has enacted laws increasing the government control over the

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<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

<sup>218</sup> Lewis, B. (1994). Why Turkey Is the only Muslim Democracy. *The Middle East Quarterly*, 41-49.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid, *Why Turkey Is the only Muslim Democracy*.

courts and further threatening to implement censorship of the web.<sup>221</sup> The Turkish economy is not in the strongest position. Currently, Turkey has the largest deficit as an Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) country.<sup>222</sup> In addition to Turkey's workforce facing a spike in unemployment and gender inequality. Turkey's political ambitions towards the EU accession seem to have subsided, as domestic issues are major concerns.

Overall, Turkey's history is different from other Muslim countries for many reasons starting with the fact that it was never colonized or subject to European imperial rule. Secondly, the Turks were the creators of their own way of life. The Turkish government implemented democratic reforms without foreign involvement. Next, Turkey's relationship with the U.S. dates back to the Ottoman Empire, which is rare in the Arab world. Turkey's interactions with the U.S. and experiences with democracy have existed longer than most Muslim countries.<sup>223</sup> The Turkish democratic process has continued throughout its history with experiments in parliamentary democracy. Turkey made a choice towards modernization to better their relationship with the U.S. While the measures have changed, all Turkish leaders held democracy as the medicine for a civil society.<sup>224</sup> One of the keys in Turkey's democratic success has been its progressive nature. Instead of implementing drastic reforms at once, Turkish leaders have implemented phases of limited democracy to encourage what they believed to be a civil

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<sup>221</sup> Bacik, Gokhan, "5 Informal Institutions in Turkish Politics." *Informal Power in the Greater Middle East: Hidden Geographies* (2014): 71.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid.

society. Turkey is heir to the traditions of the separation of the politics from the religious arena.<sup>225</sup>

## **Recommendations**

The challenges of sustainability for Muslim democracies depend on the internal and external factors of political Islam, power, past and present foreign intervention. The study of Egypt and Tunisia present historical obstacles for all the factors and further imply challenges for the current democratic transitions. The dictators in both countries previously implemented temporary democratic reforms for their own political interest with countries such as the U.S. Therefore, as the countries continue their democratic transitions it is important for them to develop reforms and change the infrastructure of government similar to Turkey. The factors that have contributed to the Turkish democracy are secularism, a commitment to modernization, proper enforcement of democratic reforms and the accession to the EU.

In order for democracy to exist in Egypt and Tunisia, the government will have to develop a way to control the influence of religion in politics through the collaboration of Islamist and Secularist. Secularism for Turkey was not the complete removal of religion from society, but rather a process to prevent its impact. This process in recent times is the result of Islamist and Secularist working towards the goal of EU accession. The collaboration multiple political parties allow Islamist, Secularist, Socialist and even Independents have a voice in governance. Further, increase in political participation adds to the legitimacy of governments. The transitional governments of both Egypt and Tunisia should be eager to establish reforms that legitimize their commitments to

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<sup>225</sup> Ibid, *The Many Faces of Political Islam*.

democracy. The enforcement of the democratic reforms will also factor into the country's stability. Turkey and Egypt's military's role in politics present power struggles to sustain and establish democracy. As the study presented, democratic reforms require the proper changes to infrastructure and power shifts in governance.

## **Conclusion**

The compatibility between Islam and democracy has proven to be circumstantial. While countries of Turkey, Indonesia, Malaysia and Bangladesh indicate Muslim democracies are attainable; this study presents the factors of why such democracies are marginal. The factors of political Islam, power, past and foreign intervention have contributed to the lack of sustainability in Muslim democracies throughout the Arab world. In this study, Islam and democracy were defined to analyze initial conflicts of compatibility beyond the historical patterns of authoritarian regimes in the region. The analysis of Islam provided an understanding of universal principles of the faith in order to explain the ideology of political Islam. Political Islam acts an instrument for individuals, groups, and organizations to pursue their own political objectives. In turn, political Islam is seen as a violent ideology used by Islamist extremist organizations. The theory of democracy is analyzed and presents conflicts with the U.S. view of liberal democracy for the Arab world. As a result, liberal autocracy shows how problematic the assertion of liberal reforms has been for Egypt and Tunisia.

Egypt's history shows a continuation of autocratic rule that increased the power of the state. The rulers of Egypt shared a common theme of implementing temporary democratic reforms coupled with the priority of economic growth. Mubarak's desire for centralized power was seen in Mubarak's reforms to the economy, treatment on



fundamental rights, and the reduction in political competition. Now that the military has taken the responsibility of ensuring a genuine democratic transition, the military's role in politics becomes another factor in the democratization.

In the case of Tunisia, Bourguiba's implementation of secularism and modernization failed to have long-term impacts on society due to the structure of centralized power. The Tunisian government under Bourguiba, kept the military apolitical, prohibited opposition groups from infiltrating the political system. Therefore, the secular reforms lacked enforcement and further were viewed as methods of power. Bourguiba's focus on secularism resulted in a struggling economy. When Ben Ali assumed power, he campaigned on weaknesses of Tunisia under Bourguiba. However, Ben Ali, just as his predecessor, wanted to centralize the power of the state and eliminate political opposition. Overtime, Tunisians, felt greater restrictions of fundamental rights and freedoms than under the previous dictator.

The historic trends of the Arab world present Turkey as a possible model for the countries of the Arab Spring. The study of Turkey's history shows the sustainability of democracy through government-enforced secularism, effective implementation of modernization, and possibility of accession the EU. The state-enforced secularism allowed the government to manipulate the influence of Islam in society. The process of implementing secularism and modernization was not peaceful process, and Turkey has a history of religious and ethnic conflicts. However, by the early 1980s, the Turkish government seen the benefits of the EU membership and started to implement democratic reforms to ensure the rights of religious and ethnic groups. The secular reforms in Turkey required a proper infrastructure and enforcement to sustain democracy. Egypt and Tunisia

can learn from Turkey's progress in democratization; however, the foundation needed to sustain democracy will require reformations of additional factors to overcome historically internal and external factors that have hindered the sustainability of Muslim democracies.

**CHAPTER 3**  
**TUNISIA'S PROGRESS & EGYPT'S STEPS BACKWARDS**

## **TUNISIA'S PROGRESS & EGYPT'S STEPS BACKWARDS**

### **Introduction**

In the wake of 2014, the countries of the Arab Spring are now in the midst of their third anniversary since the revolutions and uprisings. Egypt and Tunisia have both completed their first free and fair elections since the ousting of autocratic rulers. The democratic transitions have been plagued within the last two years due to both regions struggle to maintain civil order and peace. However, the Tunisian government has managed to prevail in instituting and further enforcing democratic reforms. While the Islamists in Egypt remain unsatisfied, tensions are high in the region with the military's campaign against the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) last year after ousting democratically elected president Mohammed Morsi. Critics of democratization in the Middle East argue that democratic elections allow Islamic militant regimes to resurge and further may develop anti-democratic governments.<sup>226</sup> The anti-democratic regimes that are feared essentially occurred under authoritarian regimes. The issues lie with how democratic elections reveal bureaucratic issues that have hindered democratization in the region such as the military's role in politics, Islamic political organizations, and the cooperation or lack thereof between Islamist and secularist.

The analysis of the bureaucratic issues as noted above is discussed in both Tunisia and Egypt. Through this analysis it is determined which factors have contributed to Tunisia's continued progress in democratization over Egypt. The results of this analysis will aid in demystifying the fear of anti-democratic regimes as a result democratic

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<sup>226</sup> Ghabbian, Najib; *Democratization and the Islamist Challenge in Arab World*, Westview Press, Boulder, CO. 1997.

elections and further indicate the importance of examining these factors in the future for Muslim democracies. This chapter concludes with recommendations and an outlook into the future of both countries democratic transitions.

## **Tunisia**

### **The Military's Role in Politics**

Tunisia has remained a unique region in the uprisings of the Arab Spring. From a street vendor setting himself on fire and making international headlines to its own uprisings being named the “Jasmine Revolution.”<sup>227</sup> In recent news, the Tunisian government has been recognized by John Kerry, the United States (U.S.) Secretary of State, for its continued progress towards democracy since January of 2011.<sup>228</sup> After Ben Ali and his family fled the country, the odds of Tunisia successfully carrying out free and fair elections, while controlling the violence were slim in retrospect to the chaos surrounding its borders. When comparing Tunisia to its neighboring countries, the region is considerably smaller than Algeria, Libya and Egypt. The size of Tunisia suggests major implication on its military such as the size and its role in the region.

The Tunisian military was composed of about 36,000 soldiers, as of 2011, across the Army, Armed Forces, Navy, and Air Force.<sup>229</sup> Tunisia's military expenditure average from 2010 to 2012 was approximately 1.48%. The relatively low military expenditure shows that Tunisia did not face major external threats and Ben Ali ensured the military was not threatening to his rule.<sup>230</sup> The Tunisian military has a long-standing relationship history with the U.S. The U.S. has not only provided financial assistance but has

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<sup>227</sup> *The World Factbook* 2013-14. Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 2013  
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>

<sup>228</sup> Ibid.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

supported the military since Tunisia's independence by providing weapons and joint training exercises.<sup>231</sup> Approximately 70% of the Tunisians military equipment is of U.S. origin.<sup>232</sup> Further the country is one of only a selected few that has cadets actually stationed in the U.S.<sup>233</sup> The Tunisian military's size and relationship with the U.S. presents major implications on its characteristics.

In order to understand civilian-military relations in Tunisia, there has to be an historical analysis of the military's role in the society. Historically, the Tunisian military never revolted against the state or involved in the Arab-Israeli conflict.<sup>234</sup> The military has essentially always upheld the states authority up until January of 2011. In the Habib Bourguiba period, the military was characterized as resembling the French army with the purpose of defending the nation from all domestic and foreign threats.<sup>235</sup> Bourguiba took pride in maintaining a virtuous military. In doing so, he banned all military personnel from having any legal political affiliations, including associations with the ruling party.<sup>236</sup> Bourguiba further secluded the military officers from any state affairs and denied the military any role in the modernization of Tunisia.

During this period, the military served as defenders of the nations security and integrity.<sup>237</sup> As a result, the Tunisian military was more of a civilian force in charge of securing and upholding Bourguiba's ideal of Tunisian nationalism. Bourguiba

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<sup>231</sup> Mohammed, Arashad; Markey, Patrick (February 2014). "Kerry praises Tunisian progress, promises help against militants," Received from Reuters: <http://www.reuters.com/article/2014/02/18/us-tunisia-kerry-idUSBREA1H0OB20140218>

<sup>232</sup> Ibid.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> L. B. Ware. Ben Ali's Constitutional Coup in Tunisia. *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (Autumn, 1988), pp. 587-601.

<sup>235</sup> L. B. Ware. The Role of the Tunisian Military in the Post-Bourgiba Era *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (Winter, 1985), pp. 27-47. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4326972>

<sup>236</sup> Ibid.

<sup>237</sup> Charles Micaud, "Leadership and Development: The Case of Tunisia," *Comparative Politics*, volume I, No 4., July 1969, p. 471.

intentionally kept the military small with limited weaponry. His vision followed that of the Kemalist ideology – which was to have a system of organizations where the power was centered on secularism and Western values.<sup>238</sup> In Bourguiba's view, this type of system would maintain harmony and defend his ideals without any interruption.<sup>239</sup> Therefore, the military assumed the role as police officers for civilian control, which left a feeling of discontent amongst the soldiers.<sup>240</sup> In 1980, the military faced the threats from Colonel Qaddafi in the southern area of the country and realized how weak they were in comparison to the Libyan military.<sup>241</sup> However, Bourguiba refrained from investing in any new technologies for the military, instead he began to allow the military personnel to take on professional service jobs. The downfall of professional service jobs for military personnel was the fact that Bourguiba only allowed them to work these jobs at the military pay rate. In sum, the military under Bourguiba could be described as an apolitical and non-modernizing institution focused solely on reestablishing the status quo of Tunisia.<sup>242</sup>

In 1987, Ben Ali assumed the position of president and removed Bourguiba from office citing the constitution in his defense. Ben Ali's career experience provided insight on how the military's role may have changed in Tunisia. Prior to being appointed as Prime Minister under Bourguiba, Ben Ali was one of the first class officers to lead Tunisia to independence.<sup>243</sup> Ben Ali's career in the military led him to studying artillery services at Fort Bliss in Texas, securing a degree in electrical engineering, and landing a

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<sup>238</sup> Ibid.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid, The Role of the Tunisian Military in the Post-Bourguiba Era.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid, The Role of the Tunisian Military in the Post-Bourguiba Era.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid.

job as the Director of Military Security.<sup>244</sup> Later, Ben Ali was appointed as the Tunisian Ambassador of Warsaw, Secretary of State or National Defense and finally Minister of Interior.<sup>245</sup> Therefore, when Ben Ali became president there was an underlying assumption that the military would become heavily involved in politics due to his military career. In the early years of presidency, his changes to the military were seen through promotions of officers, restructuring of the defense infrastructure and in the implementation of new defense organizations. Ben Ali promoted military personnel in the Army and Air Force who had proven knowledge of technological capabilities.<sup>246</sup>

The restructuring of the defense infrastructure and the implementation of new defense organization were both seen in the same context. The Council of National Security was created to gather data and assess defense policies (domestic and international) in order to safeguard Tunisia against any possible threats.<sup>247</sup> The coalition's major achievement was uncovering a terrorist network attempting to smuggle arms into the region.<sup>248</sup> The composition of the coalition was of lieutenants, generals and the heads of defense ministries.<sup>249</sup> Ben Ali's next move was the isolation of the military from the police and security forces. During the 1990s, Ben Ali employed 120,000 to 200,00 police and security patrol under the control of the Ministry of Interior.<sup>250</sup>

The coalition and defense ministries became a tool in the military's involvement in state affairs. However, Ben Ali still encouraged the sentiment of Tunisian nationalism just as his predecessor. The difference between the two lied in Ben Ali's control and

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<sup>244</sup> Ibid.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid, The Role of the Tunisian Military in the Post-Bourgiba Era.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid.

<sup>250</sup> Risa Brooks (2013) Abandoned at the Palace: Why the Tunisian Military Defected from the Ben Ali Regime in January 2011, *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 36:2, 205-220.



desire to have a secured state. The military expenditures were high during his time as president but its still unclear how the funds were actually spent. The Tunisian military equipment from the U.S. and France were outdated.<sup>251</sup> In contrast to the Egyptian military, Ben Ali did not conserve any private enterprises; nor did the military personnel have career advancements to the state or retirement benefits.<sup>252</sup> Ben Ali strategically kept the military's daily responsibilities to humanitarian assistance, disaster relief, and border patrol.<sup>253</sup> Interestingly, the military did not function in Tunis the police and other security forces controlled by the Ministry of Interior.<sup>254</sup>

Therefore in January of 2011, when Ben Ali called the military to intervene in Tunis, the severity of the uprisings was at its peak. The police and security forces were overwhelmed and no longer able to control the protesters as more demonstrations broke out across Tunisia. However, when General Rachid Ammar, Army Chief of Staff, declined Ben Ali's request and disengaged his troops from Tunis, this marked history for the Tunisian military.<sup>255</sup> Historically, the Tunisian military did not participate or intervene in political activity to this magnitude. The refusals of the military to repress protesters sparked the initial ending of the regime. Ben Ali's systematic approach to separating the military in general led to his demise.

The decision of the Tunisian military to not violently repress protesters and uphold the revolution, proved how powerful the Tunisian military was at that time. Based on the historical analysis of the military's role in politics, this decision by General Ammar is not

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<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> Ibid.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid, Abandoned at the Palace: Why the Tunisian Military Defected from the Ben Ali Regime in January 2011.

as surprising. The Tunisian military were never power a driven entity or sought out a part in politics like the Egyptian military. General Ammar's pledge to uphold the revolution, until elections showed a level of cooperation that is unique to the Arab world. The Arab world is characterized by its authoritarian regimes that are either supported by the military or battling with the military for power. The Tunisian military in the Bourguiba period was for the people and a Tunisian nationalism. Therefore, it would be unlikely for the military to support Ben Ali fighting against the people, especially with his treatment of the military. Based on the historical analysis, the military endured harsh conditions as the defenders of the nation, just as ordinary Tunisians. The Tunisian military is continuing to combat terrorism and remain out of politics. This is one of the major reasons why Tunisia has continued to progress in its democratic transition because there is no opposition between the state and the military as witnessed in Egypt.

In February of this year, the U.S. Secretary of State, John Kerry, visited Tunisia and commended the government on their progress in democratization. Kerry said, "No democracy can survive or prosper without security."<sup>256</sup> The Tunisian military efforts in the revolution and transition are well respected by the U.S. government. During the visit, Kerry also announced the U.S. would be giving the military a high-tech vehicle to help in terrorist investigations.<sup>257</sup> Since the revolution, the U.S. has provided increased training and funds to the Tunisian military.<sup>258</sup>

### **Islamic Political Organizations**

Islamic Political Organization or Party's are perceived as Islamist who want to

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<sup>256</sup> Lee, M. (2014, February 18). Kerry pledges security help to tunisia. *Military Times*. Retrieved from <http://www.militarytimes.com>.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

insert traditional Islam into secular politics. The degree to which this is carried out varies within different organizations and even regions. In the study of Islamic party's there are various factors to consider such as the country, party interest, history and current actions in pursuing their interests. Recently, Islamic parties have been called extremist and terrorist groups.<sup>259</sup> However, not all Islamic parties are violent or involved in politics. Islamic parties becoming more violent and persistent in entering politics can in some cases be the result of an issue with the social conditions of society.

The history of Tunisia's Islamic movements supports that claim. In the 1970s, the Quranic Preservation Society was established with the purpose to encourage "piety and faithfulness."<sup>260</sup> The society was approved by the government and shared similar reviews as the regime. Reportedly, the Society accepted their place under the Ministry of Religious Affairs and did not feel as if they needed to further infiltrate themselves into government.<sup>261</sup> However, in the latter part of the 1970s, this sentiment began to change as the social conditions worsened. During this time social unrest was seemingly high along with frustrations due to the division of labor in Tunisia. As a result, members of the Society left to form al-Jamaat al-Islamiyya (The Islamic Group).<sup>262</sup> The founder, Rachid al Ghannouchi quickly set the Groups mission to end Bourguiba's one-party system.<sup>263</sup> The conditions in the late 1970s involved high unemployment and poor living conditions as a result of the harsh economic times. The anti-Bourguibat ime for the Group evolved into the "Movement of Islamic Renewal."<sup>264</sup>

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<sup>259</sup> Ibid, The Role of the Tunisian Military in the Post-Bourgiba Era.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

<sup>261</sup> Ibid, The Role of the Tunisian Military in the Post-Bourgiba Era.

<sup>262</sup> Jennifer Noyon, *Islam, Politics, and Pluralism: Theory and Practice in Turkey, Jordan, Tunisia, and Algeria* (London: The Royal Institute of International Affairs, 2003), 100.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

<sup>264</sup> Ibid.

The Movement of Islamic Renewal ignited in the 1980s with a significant impact on society. Formerly, the Islamic Group, the Movement de la Tendance Islamique (MTI), redefined its purpose to promote economic reform, institute the fundamental principles of Islam and continue its efforts to end the one-party rule of Bourguiba.<sup>265</sup> At that time, their purpose alone gained support from people all over Tunisia. The MTI attempted to gain legal party status but was denied and some of its leaders were even jailed.<sup>266</sup> However, the MTI was very organized and expanded their platform to include the promotion of civil rights and liberties for the people. This essentially made the MTI be viewed as the first pro-democratic group to express its support for pluralism.<sup>267</sup>

By the late 1980s, Ben Ali assumed power and Ghannouchi, founder of the MTI, agreed to work with the new president. Initially, Ghannouchi signed the “National Pact,” which was a social contract between the state and Islamic groups related to the MTI.<sup>268</sup> In return, Ghannouchi expected he would be able to propose a list of candidates to run in the upcoming legislative elections. However, not soon after the Pact was signed, Ben Ali reversed his decision and prohibited any Islamic party or group with the word Islamic or Islam in its name from running in any election.<sup>269</sup> This prohibition still existed as of 2013 in Tunisia. As a result of this ruling the MTI, renamed itself to Hizb Ennadha, the Renaissance Party. Unfortunately, Ben Ali still refused to grant the Ennadha legal party status to run in the legislative elections. The Ennadha’s ideological framework was summed up in Ghannouchi’s view of an Islamic political government that encompassed an elected president and parliament by people, which would legitimize political

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<sup>265</sup> *Tunisia the world almanac of Islam*. (2013, July 13). Retrieved from <http://almanac.afpc.org/Tunisia>

<sup>266</sup> Ibid.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid, The Role of the Tunisian Military in the Post-Bourguiba Era.

<sup>269</sup> Ibid.

participation.<sup>270</sup>

Upon Ghannouchi's return to Tunisia, after being exiled in 1989, he returned to the party being legalized and able to run in the legislative elections. During a civil society conference, Ghannouchi expressed his wish for the separation between church and state similar to the U.S. liberal democracy.<sup>271</sup> Ghannouchi denounced Islam being imposed by the state because in every instance the state took this approach revolutions would occur. The founding principles of the Ennadha are the reasons why the party was able to increase its support over the years despite Ben Ali's oppressive tactics. The Ennadha party was legalized in March of 2011 and won a large number of seats Tunisia's first democratic elections after Ben Ali stepped down as president of the country.<sup>272</sup> Critics of the party believed the victory has led a path for religious politics to resurge; however, the parties founding platform was against political Islam governed by the state.<sup>273</sup>

Contrary to the opposing views, the Ennadha's supporters believe the party provides the balance of power needed to progress towards democracy. After the electoral victory, Ghannouchi feelings were expressed in this quote:

*"Our vision of Islam is a moderate one and since 1981...we have declared that we accept democracy without any restrictions and we accept the decision of the people whether they come with us or against us."*<sup>274</sup>

In the early stages of governance, the Ennadha party has faced hurdles as the party's success is under a microscope with the world watching as Tunisia continues to progress

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<sup>270</sup> Ibid.

<sup>271</sup> Ibid.

<sup>272</sup> Lewis, A. (2011, October 25). Profile: Tunisia's ennahda party. *BBC World News*. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-15442859>

<sup>273</sup> Ibid.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid.

towards democratization. Thus far, the Ennadha party is challenging the conventional wisdom that democratic provides a pathway for Islamic governance and as its presence in government has negative implications.

However, another factor in the study of Islamic political organizations involve discussing the extremist presence in the region. In Tunisia, marginal portions of the more violent Islamic groups tend to be less organized and smaller. The Hizb al-Tahrir (The Liberation Party) is considered one of Tunisia's most dangerous parties. The Ali-Tahrir seeks to establish an Islamic state ran by a supreme religious leader known as the Caliphate.<sup>275</sup> What makes this party dangerous is the degree to which the party is willing to accomplish its mission by force or rebellion. The Al-Tahrir along with the Tunisian Sunni party sought legal party status in March of 2012, but was denied by the Interior Minister.<sup>276</sup> Critics believe if the Al-Tahrir was to win an election, then Tunisia would revert back to a one-party rule.<sup>277</sup>

Another noteworthy group is the Tunisian Combatant Group (TCG). This group was formed in 2000 with the desire to create an Islamic regime. The TCG has known contacts with Al-Qaeda and was responsible for terrorist acts in Europe, Afghanistan, and Iraq.<sup>278</sup> The group is not on the list of terrorist organization; however, it is recognized as a terrorist entity and their assets were frozen under the EO 13224 and UN Security Council Resolution 1333.<sup>279</sup> The TCG has known support from other terrorist organizations and jihadist throughout Arab world, which makes the group a threat for the state, to watch.

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<sup>275</sup> Dirk Vandewalle. From the New State to the New Era: Toward a Second Republic in Tunisia *Middle East Journal*, Vol. 42, No. 4 (Autumn, 1988), pp. 602-620 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4327835>

<sup>276</sup> Ibid.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid.

<sup>278</sup> Clement Henry Moore. The Neo-Destour Party of Tunisia: A Structure for Democracy? *World Politics*, Vol. 14, No. 3 (Apr., 1962), pp. 461-482 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2009363>

<sup>279</sup> Ibid.

Tunisia's extremist Islamic parties have been marginal in their impact on politics. However, recently Salafism has been growing throughout the region. Prior to the revolution in 2011, the Salafists presence in Tunisia was minimal and the organization seemed apolitical. Salafism is described as a relatively large category of "religiously conservative social movements," and to the right of the Ennadha party.<sup>280</sup> Therefore, it is hard to classify the actions of certain groups under the Salafism because the movements vary based on different regions. In Tunisia, the Salafist have made their presence known by several arson attacks and University disturbances, which has resulted in the Religious Affairs ministry closely monitoring the Salafists developments. President Marzouki said, "...Some Salafists pose a threat against democracy."<sup>281</sup> However, Marzouki does not want to impose repressive tactics and further granted the Salafist Reform Front (Islah) a license to operate under the Political Parties law.<sup>282</sup> Despite this issuance, the Ennadha party continues to denounce critics in its pursuit of democracy through the cooperation of Islamists and Secularists.

### **Islamists and Secularists**

Tunisia's road since the uprisings has continued upward. The country has held democratic elections, the drafting of a new constitution, and most recently President Marzouki lifted the three-year state of emergency that was in place.<sup>283</sup> What has been ground breaking in Tunisia, is the cooperation between the Ennadha party and secularists. In the elections on October 23, 2011, the Ennadha party was victorious in winning a

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<sup>280</sup> Cavatorta, F., & Merone, F. (2013). Moderation through exclusion? The journey of the Tunisian Ennahda from fundamentalist to conservative party. *Democratization*, 20(5), 857-875.

<sup>281</sup> Ibid.

<sup>282</sup> Ibid.

<sup>283</sup> Ibid, Tunisia's Ennahda party. BBC World News.

majority of the seats in the Constituent Assembly.<sup>284</sup> Supporters of the conventional wisdom quickly declared this would reverse the revolution.<sup>285</sup> However, what critics of the Ennadha neglected to consider, is the history of Islam and Secularism in Tunisia.

The Bourguiba period in Tunisia was marked by his efforts to implement secularism into Tunisia's nationalism. Bourguiba's efforts were recognized in his leadership of the New Destour party's nationalism movement. After independence and becoming President Bourguiba implemented several forms in the name of secularism such as woman voting rights, the secular Personal Legal Code, and reformed education with the removal of Islam to a more universal curriculum.<sup>286</sup> The only other country that took similar measures to promote secularism was Turkey. Bourguiba tried to implement a strong presidential constitutional system but the religious elements in place were never truly eliminated to ensure the longevity of his efforts.<sup>287</sup> The elements of religion in society and further in politics had a lot to do with the countries transition from French rule. Islam provided a source of identity for Tunisians. In addition to Islam being embedded in society as a social culture.<sup>288</sup>

Bourguiba measures to implement secularism were eventually met by Islamic resistance. What Bourguiba failed to do was to develop initiatives that would collectively mobilize Tunisian's and provide prosperity for all. The harsh economic times of Bourguiba's governance led to the people relying on Islam for hope and rallying around Islamic groups that promoted better social conditions.<sup>289</sup> The Tunisian fundamentalism

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<sup>284</sup> Ibid.

<sup>285</sup> Ibid, Democratization and the Islamist Challenge in Arab World.

<sup>286</sup> Ibid, The Neo-Destour Party of Tunisia: A Structure for Democracy?

<sup>287</sup> Ibid.

<sup>288</sup> Ibid, The Role of the Tunisian Military in the Post-Bourgiba Era.

<sup>289</sup> Ibid.



that steadily grew was anti-secular. Supporters of this movement felt the Islamic way of life would result in the redistribution of wealth and would render Tunisians from any foreign powers.<sup>290</sup> The threat to Bourguiba's secularism was continued throughout his entire presidency. The supporters of the Tunisian fundamentalism movement were unemployed, typically young and overall dissatisfied with the failed promises of economic advancement through modernization.<sup>291</sup> While there was constant struggle between Islamist and Bourguiba's secularism, the government held strong with its unwillingness to let Islam into Tunisian politics. At the highest peaks of violence, Bourguiba reacted by jailing major Islamic leaders. The desire to keep Islam out of the political realm continued with Bourguiba's successor Ben Ali. Ben Ali made this a priority by not allowing Islamic party's to run in legislative elections and never justifying his action as president in the name of Islam.<sup>292</sup>

Now that Ben Ali is no longer president, the country has continued to pursue the mission of secularism. Tunisia's Islamist extremist groups are weaker than in the neighboring countries. The military has take action to suppress any violent Islamist activity, in order to maintain civil order. The civil order and cooperation witnessed in the Tunisian government is quite different from other countries in the Arab world. Tunisia's origins of secularism are deeply rooted. The Ennadha party is an Islamic party with democratic roots; therefore, it is less likely for Tunisian to revert back to an authoritarian regime. The Constituent Assembly is composed of Islamic, secular, and socialist

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<sup>290</sup> Ibid.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid.

<sup>292</sup> Ibid.

parties.<sup>293</sup>

The parties struggled in the beginning to agree on anything and some of members called for dissolution of the Islamist-led government in part because Ennadha had a large number of seats in the Constituent Assembly and party member Hamadi Jebali was elected as Prime Minister.<sup>294</sup> However, between 2011 and 2013, there was a lot of static between the Ennadha party, PM Jebali and other parties. After a well-known opposition leader, Chokei Belaid, was assassinated, Jebali declared plans for a new government.<sup>295</sup> This did not mesh well with the Ennadha party and after a series of public debates, Jebali resigned. Ali Larayedh, Jebali's successor, who was also a member of the Ennadha party, later resigned after continued public protest for his resignation.<sup>296</sup> The Tunisian people were dissatisfied with the Ennadha's government's inability to manage the transition shortly after the elections.<sup>297</sup>

However, now that there has been major power shifts in the states the situation appears to be calmer. In an effort to bring peace into the government and end protests, the Ennadha party agreed to allow a new president and prime minister from an independent party.<sup>298</sup> President Moncef Marzouki, from the Congress for the Republic party, and Mehdi Jomaa from an independent party were both elected by the Constituent Assembly.<sup>299</sup> The case of Tunisia is positive and its progress towards democratization must be closely monitored. The Ennadha party essentially handed over some of their

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<sup>293</sup> Stepan, A., & Linz, J. J. (2013). Democratization Theory and the "Arab Spring". *Journal of Democracy*, 24(2), 15-30.

<sup>294</sup> Ibid.

<sup>295</sup> Ibid.

<sup>296</sup> Ibid.

<sup>297</sup> Ibid.

<sup>298</sup> Brody-Barre, A. G. (2013). The impact of political parties and coalition building on Tunisia's democratic future. *The Journal of North African Studies*, 18(2), 211-230.

<sup>299</sup> Ibid.

power to show their willingness to cooperate and promote peace in the state. The Tunisian government has dealt with months of public protests, violent opposition, and resignations. Through all the adversity the Ennadha party has continued its mission in pursuit of democracy. The new constitution signed at the end of January this year, shows the effectiveness in the cooperation between Islamist and Secularists. First, the references to Islamic law have been removed and gender equality has been inserted.<sup>300</sup> The new constitution further guarantees the religious freedoms of religions other than Islam.<sup>301</sup> While the new constitution is the beginning, it is a major milestone for the country since the uprisings in January of 2011. Tunisia's progress can be used as a model for other countries such as Egypt.

## **Egypt**

### **The Military's Role in Politics**

Today, the Egyptian military plays a pivotal role in politics and social unrest. In the past three years, the military has ousted two presidents: Hosni Mubarak and democratically elected Mohamed Morsi.<sup>302</sup> The military was composed of about 450,00 officers, as of 2011, across the Army, Navy, Air Force and Air Defense.<sup>303</sup> Between 2010-2012, the military expenditures have averaged about 1.76% of the GDP.<sup>304</sup> Egypt has received assistance from the U.S. in annual military aid, training and through the purchasing of military equipment. In 2005, Egypt's defense budget approximately took up about 3.4% of the economy, with U.S. aid occupying about 25% of the defense

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<sup>300</sup> Ibid.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid.

<sup>302</sup> The World Factbook 2013-14. Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency, 2013.  
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html>

<sup>303</sup> CNN Egypt's Military Key Facts

<sup>304</sup> Ibid.

spending. The U.S.-Egypt relations date back to Egypt's independence from the United Kingdom. Both party's diplomatic interests have aligned with peace and stability in the Middle East. In addition to promoting economic growth in Egypt and regional security concerns. To better understand how Egypt's military has developed into such a decisive force, there has to be an historical analysis of its role.

Unlike the Tunisian military, the Egyptian military's power and influence in politics was seen shortly after independence from the British. In 1952, a military coup known as the Free Officers Movement ousted King Farouk and declared Egypt a Republic. A few years later, one of the coups leaders Gamal Abdel Nasser became president of Egypt. During Nasser's rule, Britain, France and Israel attempted an invasion to reclaim the Suez Canal, but were unsuccessful. However, over a decade later, Israeli forces in the Six-Day war along with Syria and Jordan defeated Egypt.<sup>305</sup> One of the most important impacts on the military under Nasser's rule was his decision to appoint military officers to regulatory and economic positions.

Upon his death, in 1970, his vice president, Anwar al-Sadat became president. Sadat's initial measure, as president was to reduce the number of military officers in government.<sup>306</sup> In addition to, refocusing the military's role towards foreign affairs such as national security. Another important measure was the peace treaty with Egypt and Israel. The negotiations between Sadat and the Israeli Prime Minister led to a Nobel Prize for Peace in 1978.<sup>307</sup> This was the first peace treaty that Israel had with any Arab state. Sadat was assassinated at a military parade in 1981. When his predecessor, Hosni

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<sup>305</sup> Springborg\*, R. (1979). Patrimonialism and policy making in Egypt: Nasser and Sadat and the tenure policy for reclaimed lands. *Middle Eastern Studies*, 15(1), 49-69.

<sup>306</sup> Waterbury, J. (1983). *The Egypt of Nasser and Sadat: the political economy of two regimes* (Vol. 6). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

<sup>307</sup> Ibid.

Mubarak, took office, all of Sadat's efforts to decrease the military power were completely reversed. Mubarak's biggest impact on military was shifting its focus from national security to the economy. This was seen in the Ministry of Defense's creation of the National Service Products Organization (NSPO), Ministry of Military Production (MOMP), and the Arab Organization for Industrialization (AOI).<sup>308</sup> All of these company's purposes revolved about the production of goods and services.

Essentially, the military owned untaxed factories, farms and companies. The military ended up owning majority of public goods such gas stations, parking lots, and grocery stores.<sup>309</sup> The reforms were all in regards to Mubarak's economic liberalization plan for Egypt. Mubarak further guaranteed military officers positions in the government upon retirement. This was one of benefits that the Tunisian military lacked. The retired military officers received government salaries and military pensions. The retired military officers and generals were appointed to positions as governors, heads of state-owned oil companies and the transportation systems.<sup>310</sup> The problem with Mubarak's privatization of military enterprises was that there was never a transfer of enterprises to allow Egyptians outside of the military to benefit.

In 2011, anti-Mubarak protesters began to demand that he resign as president. The demonstrations appeared to be fueled by Tunisians call for president Ben Ali to step down.<sup>311</sup> Mubarak attempted to reorganize his cabinet and announced he would resign in September of that year. However, as protests got larger and spread across the country, Mubarak stepped down in February of that year. Immediately after Mubarak stepped

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<sup>308</sup> Barnett, M. N. (2012). *Confronting the costs of war: military power, state, and society in Egypt and Israel*. Princeton University Press.

<sup>309</sup> Ibid.

<sup>310</sup> Ibid.

<sup>311</sup> Azzam, M. (2012). *Egypt's military council and the transition to democracy*. Chatham House.

down, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) took over Egypt for a year and a half. During this period, the SCAF asserted its control in the judiciary, expanded the military's businesses and established relations with Islamic organizations including the MB. The SCAF granted immunity to retired military officers that were charged of corruption and opened up an industrial chemical plant.<sup>312</sup> Even with the SCAFs efforts to boost the economy, all the state-owned enterprises revenue never reached average Egyptian households.

The SCAFs relationship with the MB had major implications on the military's influence in politics. Critics believed this relationship resulted in president Morsi winning the democratic elections.<sup>313</sup> Morsi's opposition claimed there were voting violations backed by the SCAF during the elections. However, the relationship between the SCAF and MB member Morsi began to unfold shortly after elections.<sup>314</sup> First, the SCAF issued a constitution declaration to remove any authority Morsi would have over the armed forces. In hopes of maintaining a good relationship with the SCAF, Morsi appointed more army officers to governor and minister positions. Morsi went further to ratify the newly drafted constitution to ensure the military sustained its independent status and control over its own budget.<sup>315</sup> The legislative had to consult with the military before issuing any laws that would impact the armed forces.<sup>316</sup> Morsi granted the military multiple advantages and benefits, such as continuing to expand untaxed military businesses and increasing the number of state-owned businesses that went under the

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<sup>312</sup> Ibid.

<sup>313</sup> Ibid.

<sup>314</sup> Mlambo, M. S. (2014). General Abdel al-Sisi-solidifying Egypt's military hold on governance: people making an impact. *Africa Conflict Monthly Monitor*, 76-77.

<sup>315</sup> Ibid.

<sup>316</sup> Ibid.

military enterprises.<sup>317</sup>

Morsi's provisions in favor of the military fell short of approval and were not enough to avoid the military coup that removed him from power in June of 2013. During the period leading up to Morsi's removal, the MB and other Islamic organizations were accused of kidnapping soldiers. In turn, the military reacted violently and this sparked period of violent clashes between the military and Islamic organizations. General al-Sisi responded by implementing counter-terrorism strategies against the MB.<sup>318</sup> The violence continued and was further heightened by Morsi's removal. General al-Sisi viewed the ousting of Morsi as the right plan of action for Egypt, "We will build an Egyptian society that is strong and stable, that will not exclude any of the its sons."<sup>319</sup> The first measures General al-Sisi implemented was suspending the constitution drafted by the MB and appointed the interim president, Adli Mansour with elections to occur sometime this year.<sup>320</sup> The roadmap towards democracy led by General al-Sisi included the drafting of a new constitution followed by presidential and parliamentary elections. However, in reaction to this roadmap there has been an array of violence amongst Islamic organizations. As a result the military began jailing thousands of MB leaders and burning down the organizations headquarters. The next section further discusses the MB presence in Egypt and their influence on politics.

### **Islamic Political Organizations**

The MB is Egypt's largest and oldest Islamic organization. In 1928, the MB was founded by Hassan al-Banna, with the purpose of spreading the Islamic moral and good

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<sup>317</sup> Mansour, M. (2013). Egypt's military devises strategy to move egypt beyond political islamism. *Journal*, 11 (17), 7-11. Retrieved from <http://www.jamestown.org/tm/>

<sup>318</sup> Ibid.

<sup>319</sup> Ibid.

<sup>320</sup> Ibid.

works to the people.<sup>321</sup> The MB sought a complete transformation in the world order. While the group aimed to create an Islamic state, they were able to garner support at the grass-root level through civil works in the community that helped Egypt's lower and middle classes.<sup>322</sup> The MB ran mosques and schools throughout Egypt. By the 1940s, the group's membership was about 500,000.<sup>323</sup> As the membership continued to grow, Al-Banna felt the organization needed a military force to combat British rule known as the Special Apparatus. The Special Apparatus was said to be responsible for violent massacres and assassinations.<sup>324</sup> Al-Banna denounced the accusations that the MB was responsible for the assassination of former Prime Minister Mahmoud al-Nuqrashi. However, the government tried to dissolve the group and Al-Banna was assassinated in 1928. Later, the MB was targeted for the failed assassination attempt of President Nasser. This resulted in the group being banned, tortured and imprisoned.

By the 1980s, the MB attempted to reposition itself in politics by fostering a relationship with the government similar to the one the organization had with former president Sadat. Sadat instituted this strategic alliance after fearing that threat of a growing opposition force from Islamic organizations aligning with the MB. However, this political relationship did not last long between Sadat and Islamic organizations due to individual groups radical ambitions to overthrow the regimes. Therefore, the MB expanded its alliances with more non-Islamist parties to continue their own political agenda. The MBs first measure was to develop partnerships with the Wafd, Socialist

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<sup>321</sup> Chris Harnisch & Quinn Meham (2009) Democratic Ideology in Islamist Opposition? The Muslim Brotherhood's 'Civil State', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 45:2, 189-205.

<sup>322</sup> Ibid.

<sup>323</sup> Ibid.

<sup>324</sup> Ibid.



Labour and Socialist Liberal party's.<sup>325</sup> As a result, the MB became a major opposition force to the government with the new alliances. The MB has continued to remain as a strong opposition force to the government even though the group has faced crackdowns three times throughout Egypt's history – in Royal Egypt, and twice under Nasser.<sup>326</sup>

The MBs political power through alliances with non-Islamist alliances was noticeable in 2000, when the MB won seats in the People's Assembly of parliament, which shocked former president Mubarak. Mubarak began to implement a number of legal reforms as a result of this win. The constitution was amended to state political activity or political parties shall not be based on any religious background or foundation. In addition to this reform, Mubarak implemented anti-terrorism legislation that gave security forces the power to condemn any opposition activity. This resulted in the MB being banned from gaining legal party status. However, this did not impede on the MB establishing political gains. The MB has a history of maneuvering and further surviving in Egyptian politics. In all three times in which the Egyptian government implemented crackdowns, the organization has resurged in to society and further politics. Therefore, the strategic move by the MB to establish another entity came at no surprise.

In February of 2011, the MB established the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP), which was able to gain legal party status and was victorious in the first parliamentary elections after ousting Mubarak.<sup>327</sup> Between 2011-2012, the FJP was able to gain majority of the seats in parliament, thereby in charge of drafting a new constitution and further election MB member, Muhammad Morsi as president. As discussed in the

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<sup>325</sup> Harris, C. P. (1981). *Nationalism and Revolution in Egypt: The Role of the Muslim Brotherhood*. Hyperion Press.

<sup>326</sup> An Islamic alternative in Egypt through MB & Sadat

<sup>327</sup> Crowell, J. C. (2014). *Understanding State-Labor Relations in Morsi's Egypt: Moving beyond Islamic Narratives* (Doctoral dissertation, University of California).

previous section, Morsi first measures attempted to sustain the cooperative relationship with the SCAF.<sup>328</sup> However, what led to Morsi's ousting appeared to be his pursuit of power. While Morsi appointed retired military officers to his cabinet, these were officers that agreed to operate under his authority. Later, it is said that Morsi granted himself full authority over the executive, legislative, and constitution council through a constitution declaration.<sup>329</sup> Morsi pushed to get the newly drafted constitution approved as public opposition began to react in protest due to his new reforms. Further Morsi authorized the armed forces to protect the government buildings and polling places until the draft constitution was voted on in December of 2012.<sup>330</sup>

After the constitution was approved clashes between anti-Morsi and supporters of the MB broke out in the cities around the Suez Canal. The violence continued to spread, which led to calls for Morsi's resignation. Morsi's opposition felt the MBs interest was put first before Egypt's and he failed to bring peace to the region and implement the economic reforms as promised during his campaign.<sup>331</sup> By June 30, 2013, millions of protesters called for Morsi's resignation in the countries capital. Between the civil unrest and rising death tolls, the military ended up intervening by ousting Morsi. The military ousting Morsi ignited a campaign to crackdown on the MB. This crackdown was seen as the military being one with and for the people. Lieutenant Aba al-Latif of the police felt, the police had finally regained the trust of the police that was felt in the revolution of 2011.<sup>332</sup>

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<sup>328</sup> Ibid.

<sup>329</sup> Khan, M. (2014). Islam, Democracy and Islamism After the Counterrevolution in Egypt. *Middle East Policy*, 21(1), 75-86.

<sup>330</sup> Ibid.

<sup>331</sup> Ibid.

<sup>332</sup> Ibid.

The military began to implement their own roadmap for Egypt, while arresting and detaining the MB senior leaders. The MB was recognized as a terrorist group and charged with the killings of protesters before and after Morsi was in office.<sup>333</sup> With the military's crackdown on the MB, there was a brewing anti-army sentiment that was voiced from the Salafist's of Egypt. One of the Salafist groups called the Salafist al-Nu Party members questioned why the army who once supported the MB-led government now viewed them as terrorists:

*"...Did Al-Sisi and the intelligence just find out Morsi is a terrorist? Terrorism is to terrorize you, to put you in jail, to kidnap your son, to oppress you when you want to get your voice heard. What is happening now is a political game."*<sup>334</sup>

During the campaign to combat terrorism or dismantle the MB, President Morsi was placed under house arrest after the military declared a state of emergency.

In January of 2014, Morsi and other MB members were trialed for accusations of conspiring with foreign extremist groups. Morsi was also accused of escaping prison prior to the elections. However, the evidence to prove both accusations remains unclear and the criminal trails have continued. With all of the military's efforts to dissolve the MB, observers began to question if the military wanted to rule the government.<sup>335</sup>

General Al-Sisi has denounced reports saying he does intend to run for president.<sup>336</sup> The unraveling of the Egypt's democratic elections did not result in an anti-democratic government resurging. Instead, the elections revealed a bureaucratic dilemma in Egypt that has been embedded in the political culture. The MB is a well-known Islamic political

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<sup>333</sup> Profile: Egypt's ex-armed forces chief abdulfattah al-sisi. (2014, March 26). *BBC World News*. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-19256730>

<sup>334</sup> Ibid.

<sup>335</sup> Ibid.

<sup>336</sup> Ibid.

organization to Egypt and is not new to working within constraints of the Egyptian government. This is an organization that has had a longstanding relationship with the Egyptian government decades prior to the Arab Spring. Egyptian history reveals that the MB was tolerated by the government as long as it restricted itself to Islamic social advocacy, remaining apolitical, restoring militia, and avoided criticizing the regimes and its policies. However, the MB that evolved into an electing presidential candidate is when the organization became a larger threat than ever before witnessed. The Egyptian military previously has abided by the regime and executive leadership of their role in society; however, with Mubarak ousted and Morsi as president, this in fact threatened the military's ability to finally operate politically independent from the government. Morsi was supported by the military, until he began enacting his own political agenda. Therefore, this presents implications on the military's own political agenda in Egypt moving forward in the democratic transition. Since the military has proclaimed the MB as a terrorist group, does this provide implications that Egyptians are calling for secularism in politics? In order to further analyze this perspective there has to be a discussion on Islam and Secularism in Egypt.

### **Islamists and Secularists**

The roadmap for Egypt led by General Al-Sisi in collaboration with other government officials was an approved referendum in January of 2014. The referendum calls for elections to take place this year with parliamentary and then presidential elections.<sup>337</sup> With the tentative elections expected to occur sometime in April, the interim President Mansour issued a decree to allow the electoral commission to begin preparing

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<sup>337</sup> Lesch, A. M. (2014). Troubled Political Transitions: Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. *Middle East Policy*, 21(1), 62-74.

for the upcoming elections. In addition, this decree makes the commission prohibited from legal challenge.<sup>338</sup> This decree presents major implications on whether or not the new elections will be considered democratic. The elections have also been criticized based on the court order banning the MB from participating and other politicians claim there is limited freedom of political expression. Critics of this decree also say it provides a pathway for General Al-Sisi to run for president. General Al-Sisi previously denounced questions of whether or not he would run in the upcoming elections. However, in March General Al-Sisi announced he would be resigning from the military and running for president.<sup>339</sup> General Al-Sisi is predicted to win the elections based on his popularity, role in Egypt's democratic transition since the ousting of Mubarak and support from the military. The upcoming elections are scheduled for May 26 to May 27 will put Egypt's steps towards democratization to test once again.<sup>340</sup>

In the midst of all the chaos and protests in Egypt, there has been collaboration between Islamists and Secularists. The drafting of the new constitution for the second time encompasses an army representative, Islamist, liberal, and leftist parties, along with representatives from women groups and trade unions.<sup>341</sup> There are reports that express the committees debates revolved around expanding religious minorities and women rights.<sup>342</sup> The amendments released of Article 3 and 11 note the extension of guaranteed rights to all non-Muslims and gender equality in elected councils. Further the committee

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<sup>338</sup> Badow, Doug. "Pharaoh Al-Sisi Takes Control in Egypt: Obama Administration Sacrifices Security, Human Rights, and Democracy." (2014)

<sup>339</sup> Ibid.

<sup>340</sup> Ibid.

<sup>341</sup> Dale, R. (Ed.). (2014). *Egypt in Williamsburg: Challenges of a Post-Revolutionary Era*. Rowman & Littlefield.

<sup>342</sup> Ibid.

inserted there will be restraints on the authority of the newly elected president.<sup>343</sup> As the interim government continues to introduce new legislation, one of the biggest factors that has not been addressed is the military's enterprises in the failing economy. Egypt's weakening economy will play a major role in whether the newly elected president will be supported by the people. The upcoming elections and the military's role in the government must be closely monitored to examine if Egypt will ever sustain a progressive transition to democracy.

### **Summary of Tunisia vs. Egypt**

The cases of Tunisia and Egypt both present different perspectives to the conventional wisdom. Tunisia's progress in its democratic transition has a lot to do with the role of the Tunisian military, Islamic political organizations, and cooperation between Islamists and Secularists. The Tunisian military was always isolated from politics. The military first major intervention into politics was its refusal to condemn and combat the anti-Ben Ali demonstrations. In Tunisia, the Islamic political organizations were marginal in their role in politics and the Ennadha party was one of few who were able to capture electoral victory. While Tunisia does have violent Islamic organizations, the threat has not overshadowed the countries progress.

Tunisia arguably presents how the outcome of democratic elections will not result in an anti-democratic government. The Tunisian government recognized that the changes in the political system would have to take place in order to withstand the outcome of democratic elections. The cooperation between Islamist and secularist has strikingly made a major impact on the countries democratic transition. While the Ennadha party still holds the majority in the Constituent Assembly, the party has continued to denounce this

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<sup>343</sup> Ibid.

will have any impact on the way it governs Tunisia. The Ennadha's opposition seems to be pleased with the reorganization of power with the president and prime minister not being members of the party. The Tunisian government has recently lifted the three-year state of emergency and has been praised by supporters such as the U.S. Tunisia may in fact continue to rise as the Arab Spring's most prominent model of a Muslim democracy.

Egypt's democratic transition has been unstable since Mubarak stepped down in February of 2011. The Egyptian military influence in politics has evolved significantly since its independence. Between the military officers holding positions in the president's cabinet and further acting as governors across the region, it is hard to determine where the military's influence stops. What makes the Egyptian military different is that over the years, the military has established enterprises and gained control over a large number of state-owned businesses. In addition to the longstanding military and economic advisement from the U.S. The military has been able to maintain its revenue, while acting as a head of state for the government as it sees fit.

Another factor in Egypt is the tensions between the MB and the military. The MB has had a relationship with the Egyptian government and the military. However, what unraveled in 2013 appeared to be more of political battle between the MB and the military. The military supported Morsi in the country's first democratic elections but then began to side with the MB opposition which led to the ousting of the then president. Morsi showed collaborative efforts in favor of the military by granting them power over their own affairs, but also sought powers to secure his presidency. Unfortunately, the military's disapproval of Morsi's initiatives led to the dissolution of the MB-led government.

In the midst of the protests and violence that spread across the region as a result of the military's decision, General Al-Sisi declared the MB a terrorist organization. Therefore, the jailing, detaining, and killing of MB senior leaders and members were justified in the name of counterterrorism. The MB stands as Egypt's oldest and largest Islamic political organization with democratic founding principles. How did this organization become a terrorist organization in 2013? This appears to be a strategy by the military to remove the MB from having any further influence in the country. Since the military has gone unchallenged in Egypt, it is clear that the MB posed some type of threat that the military would not allow.

The Egyptian military has ousted two presidents without any resistance from the government. General Al-Sisi was once adamant in keeping the military's role as is without running in the president elections. However, General Al-Sisi has recently changed his stance and is currently running in the countries presidential elections schedule for the end of May. General Al-Sisi's vision democracy for Egypt is at the people will and freedom of choice. Further the opinions of Egyptians shall not be influenced or forced on by the government. Al-Sisi's opponent is Hamdeen Sabahi, who previously ran against Morsi. The outcome of the election is highly favored towards Al-Sisi; therefore, it will be interesting to examine the democratic reforms implemented and or continued this year for Egypt.

### **Recommendations and Conclusion**

Tunisia and Egypt are both at critical points in their pursuit of democracy. Tunisia is charged with sustaining peace among Tunisians, Islamist and Secularist. Egypt is on the brink of new elections and still battling the chaos of societal unrest. The process of



building and sustaining a democracy requires a solid infrastructure. This type of infrastructure is not easily built and comes with trial and error. As this research presents, democratic elections do not necessarily result in anti-democratic governments; instead, the outcomes reveal bureaucratic issues that can be positive or negative for a country depending on the military's role in politics, Islamic political organizations, and the cooperation or lack thereof between Islamist and Secularist. Tunisia's case presents when the military involvement is controlled, Islamic political organizations are fewer extremists, and secularism is infused in politics, Islamist in government can be positive for democracy. Contrary for Egypt, a stronger military presence in politics creates a power struggle with Islamic political organizations such as the MB. This power struggle fuels societal unrest and as a result overshadows any cooperation between Islamist and Secularist. However, Egypt's military intervention in politics is similar in nature to the Turkish democracy. This presents the question of how much military is necessary in securing democracy and further suppressing Islamic opposition. The differentiating factor for Egypt is the military's more recent achievements in making civilian-military relations a priority versus the Turkey's military history of enacting less favorable violent tactics to suppress religious minorities and secure secularism. The results of Egypt's upcoming elections will begin to paint the picture for the role Egypt's military will play in the future of the country's democratic transition.

This research analyzed how the outcome of democratic elections reveal bureaucratic issues in the military's role in politics, Islamic political organizations, and cooperation or lack thereof between Islamist and secularist become that can hinder democratic transitions. The democratic elections held in Tunisia and Egypt did not result

in a resurgence of anti-democratic regimes; however, they did reveal how the factor above have contributed to one countries success in democratization over another. In Tunisia the Ennadha party is working with other non-Islamic party's in the pursuit of democracy. The Tunisian government is developing into a potential model for the countries of the Arab Spring, which provides implications on the future of democracy in the MENA region. In order to do so, the government will have to continue strengthening the economy, infusing secular reforms, and monitor extremist threats from the Salafists. The case of Egypt presents another factor that was not discussed in detail in this research, which is the economy. The Egyptian government will have to address the military's role in the economy and the increasing unemployment rate. The reformation of the economy will present a variety of factors including Egypt's problems of the military's role in politics, Islamic political organizations and the cooperation of Islamist and Secularist. Therefore, the Egyptian government should continue to focus on building a sold infrastructure, if it hopes to ever be able to sustain a democracy. Tunisia and Egypt are the countries of the Arab Spring, who are continuing to test the viability of democracy in the MENA region.

## **MUSLIM POLITICS & DEMOCRACY – AN ANALYSIS OF THE ARAB SPRING**

### **Conclusion**

The term Arab Spring is used to describe a series of violent uprisings in the name of democracy that occurred in the MENA region. The chaos that erupted in one country spilled over into the borders of neighboring countries. Between 2010 and 2011, Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya was immersed in massive violent protests and demonstrations. While the MENA region is not new to protests and demonstrations from opposition groups, the protestors of the Arab Spring were quite different. The purpose of this thesis was to examine and analyze the events of uprisings to determine why the events occurred and what implications it will have on the future of Muslim democracies. This thesis takes a methodological approach by examining the social, political, and ideological aspects of the Arab Spring.

The social aspect of the Arab Spring discussion begins with a literature review to analyze the theories revolution, micromobilization, rational choice and domino. The theories established the framework to further analyze what factors contributed to the uprisings. The citizens who rose up in the Arab Spring were young, unemployed, and some were college-educated. The protests started at the grassroots level with lower class citizens who did not belong to a formal political organization. This provides implications that the reasons for the Arab Spring involved social issues of social injustices, oppression and repression, along with poverty. The social issues were discussed as pre-existing conditions that contributed to the uprisings.

After the analysis of the pre-existing conditions concluded, the political and ideological aspects of the Arab Spring were examined. The political and ideological aspects of the Arab Spring are analyzed throughout the entire thesis; however, the last two chapters analyze the implications on the sustainability of future Muslim democracies. The second chapter questions the compatibility of Islam and Liberal democracy. The analysis of this question is meant to examine the initial challenges of Islam and secular pluralism. This analysis reveals the U.S. must change its method of promoting liberal democracy based on democratic elections in the Middle East. In past years, when the U.S. institutes democratic pressures on autocratic regimes, the results render temporary democratic reforms that become illiberal. Further the internal and external factors of political Islam, power, unity and foreign intervention play a significant role in a countries ability to sustain a democracy. Egypt and Tunisia are both faced with challenges with the factors due partially to the colonial heritage left behind by European imperial powers. Turkey has been debated as the most comparable model for the countries of the Arab Spring. This chapter examines the Turkish democracy to determine if Tunisia and Egypt can implement similar secular reforms in their democratic transitions.

The final chapter of this thesis examines the factors that have contributed to Tunisia's progress and Egypt's regression in democratization. The conventional wisdom of democratic transitions argues that democratic elections result in the resurgence of anti-democratic regimes. However, the democratic elections in Tunisia and Egypt did not result in Islamic militant anti-democratic regimes. Tunisia and Egypt are at two different points in their democratic transition yet; the factors present a common analysis that is

significant for both countries, which are the military's role in politics, Islamic political organizations and cooperation between Islamist and secularist.

The Arab Spring was a new phenomenon that shined light on historical issues of the MENA. While the major themes of this research such as Islam, liberal democracy, secularism have been written about previously; however, this thesis yields new implications for how future Muslim democracies should be analyzed. First, democratic elections in the Middle East are no longer enough to ensure democracy will be established. Democratic elections in the Middle East have become more procedural because as presented they typically lead to Islamist governance. However, the Islamist presence in governance can coexist with democratic institutions as witnessed in Turkey and now Tunisia. This thesis presents the challenges of the compatibility with Islam and liberal democracy. The challenges extend themselves beyond the traditionalist view of Islam to the U.S. promotion of liberal democracy. Bush's democracy domino theory and the mishaps of the Iraqi democracy as discussed prove further the U.S. must change its foreign policy in regards to promoting democracy.

The countries of the Arab Spring experienced decades of limited participation, political competition, and free and fair elections were nonexistent. In Egypt and Libya, political Islam was infused in governance to legitimize the presidents. The Tunisian case presented secularism in the name of modernization after independence, but the reforms failed to have long-term effect. For all of the countries of the Arab Spring, Islam is known as a factor of identity and unity. As a result, this thesis presents how this has been manipulated by regimes to centralize power. Given the historical factors of the MENA, the countries are faced with the challenges of reforming Islamic cultures, legitimacy, and

political competition, all while restoring failing economies. Muslim Democracies are marginal and unique in the global world. Therefore, this thesis contributes to the understanding of specific factors that will act as the determinants of sustainability for future Muslim democracies.

Chapter 1 of this thesis sought to examine how and why the uprisings occurred beyond the argument of the U.S. promotion of democracy in Iraq. This analysis involved defining the term revolution, examining the cultural transformation and using theories to assess how the uprisings occurred. In reviewing existing theories of revolution, it was discovered that Tunisia, Egypt and Libya experienced revolutions and Iran witnessed a series of massive protests. The occurrence of the revolution is discussed through the micromobilization, rational choice and domino theory. The micromobilization theory provided support for the role of social media in the uprisings. Through the use of social media such as Facebook and Youtube, protestors were able to initiate campaigns, form informal associations, collaborate and exchange ideas in support of ousting their existing leaders. This type of communication allowed citizens of Egypt to witness what was happening in Tunisia, promote the awareness of social injustices, and their reasons for the uprisings. The rational choice theory aided in the understanding how the protests drew massive crowds based on each individual's decisions to act during that situation. The campaigns, petitions, and rallies promoted the benefits of ousting the dictators, which in turn encouraged each individual to join the movement. The domino theory provides support for the uprisings in the MENA influencing one another based on their geographic location.

The discussion of the theories in the literature review provided the foundation for the study of how and why the uprising of the Arab Spring occurred. The analysis proceeds with refuting the conventional and discussing the commonalities of political oppression, poverty, religious and ethnic conflicts as it relates to Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. The results of this analysis indicate that all the factors existed in the countries for decades prior to the uprisings of the Arab Spring. Therefore, the U.S. implementation of the Iraqi democracy may have encouraged democracy in the MENA but arguably falls short of being a direct result of the uprisings. Further the analysis reveals an important differentiating factor in the U.S. intervention in Iraq and the Arab Spring, which is that the people without foreign involvement initiated the uprisings and calls for democracy in the Arab Spring. Even though in the case of Libya, the NATO intervened. Lastly the analysis of Iran presents indication of a forthcoming revolution, if the government does not implement democratic reforms in favor of the people.

The analysis of how and why the uprisings occurred in the Arab Spring prompts the second analysis of the compatibility between Islam and democracy. Chapter 2 of this presents the questions of the compatibility between Islam and liberal democracy to examine the reasons why Muslim democracies are marginal and less sustainable in the Arab world. The existing theory Islam and democracy assert the two are not compatible based on the history of authoritarian regimes regaining control in the Arab world. Contrary to theory, the lack of sustainability in Muslim democracies stems the factors of political Islam, power, past and present foreign intervention. The factors are discussed throughout this chapter as they relate to the Egypt and Tunisia. While marginal in the Arab world, Turkey, Indonesia, Malaysia and Bangladesh, are examples of Muslim

Democracies. Turkey is analyzed as the most comparable models for the countries to determine what factors have contributed to its democracy.

As a result of this pressure, the former autocratic dictators have implemented temporary democratic reforms in the past to please the international community. The U.S. and Europe's both have long-standing ties with Muslim countries throughout the world. Therefore, the illiberal politics of the authoritarian regimes were not new issues. In times intensified violence and human right abuses, the international community reacted by advocating for Muslim countries to implement democratic reforms. The Egyptian government under Mubarak allowed the Muslim Brotherhood to openly campaign during elections but prohibited the party from receiving legal party status. In Tunisia, Ben Ali, enacting similar reforms in the minimizing political opposition.

The study of Egypt and Tunisia present the historical issues of political Islam, power, past and present foreign intervention. The analysis of Turkey provides implications on how the countries can work avoid the factors further influencing their democratic transitions. Turkey, like Tunisia, has a history secular reforms and modernization in governance. The demise of the Tunisian governments initial implementation of secularism under Bourguiba was the lack of enforcement and proper infrastructure. The Turkish government implemented a state-controlled secularism that was enforced by the military. In Tunisia, the military was isolated from politics. However, Turkey's accession to the EU provides additional insight on what implemented into the democratic transitions of Tunisia and Egypt. Through Turkey's accession to the EU, the government has been forced to guarantee the rights of religious and ethnic minority groups. In addition to, lifting historical constraints on the practice of Islam. In



turn the Turkish government has increased political competition and participation. Islamist, Secularist and other parties are working together in the pursuit of accession to the EU. Tunisia and Egypt essentially have to implement inclusive reforms that encourage political competition. As a result, the citizens should witness more collaboration in governance from different parties. The analysis of Turkish democracy present the factors of the military's role in politics and the cooperation between Islamist and Secularist that are discussed in the final chapter.

The final chapter of this thesis examines the last two years of democratic transitions in Tunisia and Egypt. The last two years for both countries have been mixed with progress and chaos. In the case of Egypt, the first democratic elections resulted in the Islamist party victory of the MB. Mohamed Morsi, member of the MB was elected president in June of 2012, served for ousted by the military in July of 2013. In Tunisia, the free and fair elections resulted in the Islamist victory of the Ennadha party. The Ennadha party has drafted a new constitution, implemented democratic reforms guarantying the rights of religious minorities, and further cooperated with secularist parties. The conventional wisdom of democratic transitions suggests democratic elections provide political space for Islamists to resurge in governance, which negatively impacts the possibility of democracy. The democratic transitions of Tunisia and Egypt present two perspectives of the conventional wisdom. The perspectives are analyzed through the factors of the military's role in politics, Islamic political organizations and the cooperation between Islamist and secularist to determine their impact on democratization.

In the case of Tunisia, the military maintained an apolitical role until the military decided to denounce Ben Ali's request to retaliate against protesters in the uprisings of

the Arab Spring. The Islamic political organizations in Tunisia are marginal in their influence in politics and extremist views. The history of Islamic political organizations in Tunisia reveal pro-democratic movements linked the Ennadha party in current times. Further the Ennadha party has shown their willingness to cooperate with secularist and other parties in the pursuit of democracy. The newly elected Constituent Assembly includes Islamist, secularist and independents parties. The results of this cooperation have led to an increase in genuine democratic reforms. The Ennadha party further agreed to elect a member of the Congress Republic Party as president and an independent candidate as prime minister. The analysis of Tunisia presents a counterargument to the conventional wisdom in regards to Islamist parties in governance being positive in the process of democratization.

The case of Egypt provides support for the conventional wisdom based on the result of the first democratic elections. However, the factors that have contributed to their regression will potentially determine if the country will ever be able to sustain a democracy. The Egyptian military has a long-standing history of being influential in politics and has continued in current times. Military officials were appointed as governors and officials in regulatory bureaucracies. The military was also able to acquire private enterprises and regulate its own defense budgets. Therefore, it came to no surprise when the military stepped in after the resignation of Mubarak to declare a roadmap for Egypt. The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) continued to expand military businesses and further implement reforms in favor the military. After the democratic elections of Morsi, the military became unhappy with the presidents assertion of power and sided with the MB opposition. In a declaration for the people, the military prompted

the resignation of Morsi and the arrests of MB members. The arrests of the MB members were a part of a military's counterterrorism plan.

The MB is Egypt's oldest and largest Islamic political party; therefore, the sudden classification of terrorists shocked non-MB supporters. The military appeared to reasserting its unique role in military politics and sought to eliminate further influence of any opposition. The MB has had relationships with the military and previous dictators for decades. However, the party gained control in the Egyptian government, any previous ties with the organization was denied by the military. In midst of the chaos in Egypt, the cooperation between Islamist and secularist has been overshadowed. The military has kept its unique role in government, but has allowed other parties to draft a new constitution. The recent revisions of the constitution show democratic reforms in guarantying religious rights and gender equality. Therefore, the case of Egypt presents how the factors of the military's role in politics, Islamic political organizations, and a lack of cooperation between Islamist and secularist can be detrimental to the sustainability of democracy.

Overall the uprisings of the Arab Spring present new implications and factors that will determine the sustainability of Muslim democracies in the MENA region. While this thesis has covered the factors presented in the past three years, the outcomes of the Arab Spring are far from over. The purpose of this thesis was to determine how and why the uprisings occurred, in addition to the implications they revealed on future of sustainability for Muslim democracies. The factors presented in tis thesis present a case for the new emergence of Muslim democracies that fall outside liberalism. As a result, this thesis leads to further research to characterize the new Muslim democracies

forthcoming in the Arab Spring. While it is easy for the U.S. to promote democracy, there is still a level of misunderstanding in regards to the type of democracy to promote in the Middle East. In recent times, the U.S. method of promoting liberal democracy has become systematic to a certain degree. This method involves encouraging or aiding in the removal of dictator by force, sending U.S. government officials to the country to aid in the transitional governments and further implement democratic elections. In the view of U.S. foreign policymakers, democratic elections are quick and efficient way to ensure democracy. However, the events of the Arab Spring show that pre-existing characteristics of the liberal democracy are not enough to sustain democracy. The factors of the military's role in politics, Islamic political organizations, and the cooperation of Islamist and secularist create new implications on the sustainability of future Muslim democracies.

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## **Curriculum Vita**

With a comprehensive understanding of the foundations of Political Science such as Political Theory, International Relations, American Government and Comparative Government, Brittany N. Foster was recognized as one of the top students in the Political Science Department at Morgan State University and a scholarship recipient at The Johns Hopkins University. Born in Baltimore, MD on August 15, 1989, early on she developed a keen interest in politics and government. Through combining key strengths of research and critical analysis, she has been able to produce adequate research papers and a thesis portfolio. As of May 2014, she completed an advanced academic degree in Government, with a concentration in Political Communications and certificate in Non-profit Management. While keeping high academic ranking throughout her collegiate career, she obtained professional experience and contributed to the success of a government agency and private sectors companies. With an exceptional aptitude for learning and leading, her professional experience is as follows:

- Currently as a Consultant, she works with clients to obtain and manage their GSA Multiple Award Schedule (MAS) contracts. She performs contract advisory services, compliance reviews, financial audits, business development and marketing training.
- As an Associate Research Analyst, she worked with Army contracting opportunities for the government. This job increased her knowledge of the federal procurement process from the beginning stages of a Market Survey to the multiple contracts and or task orders that were awarded.
- As a Student Intern, she was at the forefront with customer service and secretarial skills. She proofread documents, emails, memos, and faxes. Brittany assisted Building Managers in space projects using AutoCad Programming.
- Brittany has strong writing and research abilities. She has researched local, state, federal, and global problems that have caused economics problems and growth. I have written on several topics such as United States relations with Somalia, Illegal Immigration, and Rwandan Women. Also, she researched problems with the Baltimore City Community that assisted with mapping Urban Inequalities and Analyzing the Homeless through a Geographic Information System. Her most recent scholarly research includes a thesis portfolio titled “Muslim Politics and Democracy – An Analysis of the Arab Spring.”
- While working at a Fortune 500 company, Brittany processed and initiated claims in the freight industry that involved transport logistics residentially and globally. She performed analysis and investigations on claims pertaining to damage and or loss shipment. Brittany acted as the sole person in the claims department and eventually trained two employees to assist her with the department.
- Brittany has supervised employees while maintaining a friendly, safe, and customer service oriented environment. At AMC Columbia 14, she acted as a

direct liaison to the General Manager to ensure every employee upheld the company's purpose. There she developed a keen sense communication that allowed her to supervise employees. She led the team to provide fast and hospitable service to all guest.